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Edited by Sir John Hammerton

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RED ARMY ON THE OFFENSIVE. From Russia there comes every day news of the hammer-blows delivered by Stalin's armies against the Nazi invader. This photograph shows just one corner on the 2,000 mile long front, stretching from the frozen wastes of the Arctic to the almost equally bleak slopes of the Caucasian heights. Automatic riflemen of the Red Army are speeding the enemy's departure from yet another "inhabited place," as the villages are styled in the Russian communiqués.

Photo, U.S.S.R. Official

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ALONG THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Our Military Critic, Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

WHEN, in the first week of November, I wrote that the month had again proved to be a black one for Germany, I little expected how black it would become before its close. Germany and her partners have received a series of shattering blows; and though their full effects have not yet been realized, they threaten even more devastating results. The issue in several instances still hangs in the balance, and for the present it is better to take encouragement from what has been achieved than to indulge in optimistic speculation.

The scale and initial successes of Mr. Stalin's counter-offensive are particularly heartening, for obviously it is in Russia that the greatest results can be obtained.

In North Africa the Allies have made a good beginning, but it is clear that the Axis Powers will not be dislodged easily or quickly from their foothold in Tunisia. They are well placed to conduct a determined struggle for air supremacy, and it must be realized that the Allies, depending on a long and vulnerable line of sea communications, cannot without considerable delays develop their full strength. Until the enemy is evicted few of the strategic fruits of the great enterprise can be gathered. Even then the Mediterranean route will not be fully opened. Though convoys could be given a much more effective air umbrella and protection by light naval vessels, they would still be exposed to heavy attacks.

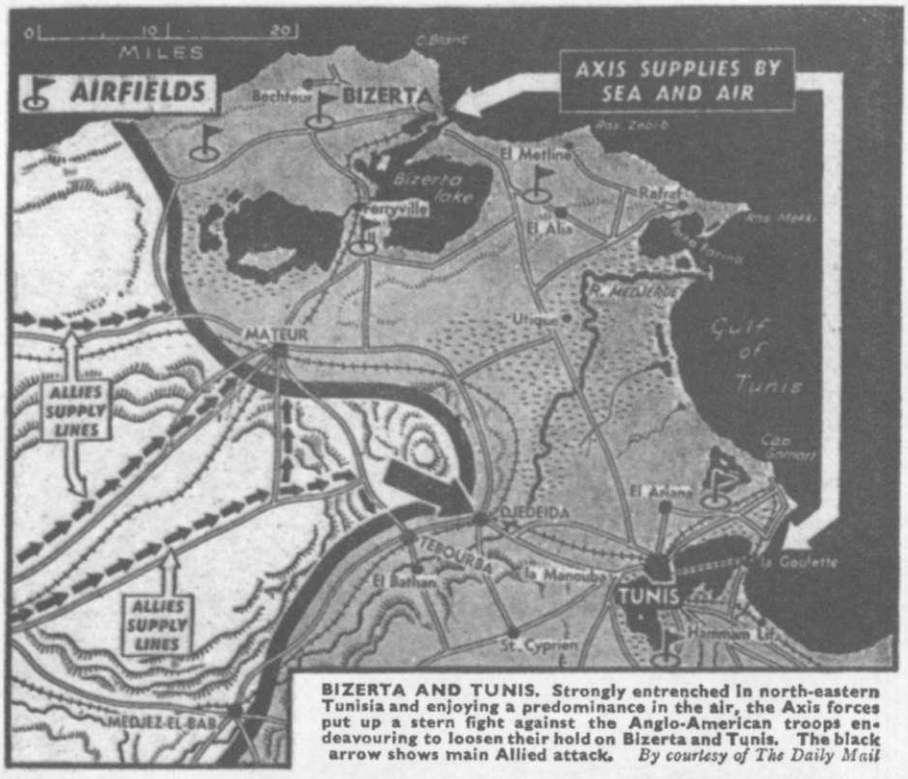
Meanwhile, in the struggle for air supremacy over the Tunisian battlefields, the Allies should be able to establish an advantage when their forward air bases are developed, for the Axis will find it difficult in a cramped area to operate bases for short-range aircraft.

ROMMEL is likely to put up a stubborn fight at El Agheila, but he can have little hope of retrieving his disaster. His chief object would now seem to be to prevent the concentration of all the Allied forces for the further development of their plans. General Alexander evidently does not underestimate the strength of Rommel's position; and, avoiding premature action, he intends to attack with the greatest force he can muster.

In the Far East Japan's naval losses continue to mount in her efforts to recapture lost ground; and the manifest inferiority of her aircraft is an encouraging feature of the situation. Her army, however, remains at full strength; and the tenacity with which her troops will fight in the most forlorn situations has been clearly proved.

NORTH AFRICA Official communiqués on events in Tunisia have been marked by reticence, and unofficial reports throw little light on the importance of what has happened in initial operations. Apparently the Allies thrust their advanced guards boldly forward in order to pen the Axis into a restricted area, and to secure the mountain passes for the passage of the main army. This seems to have been successfully accomplished, but naturally the advanced guards met heavy counter-attacks and suffered some reverses—though how severe was not made clear. The fighting evidently was sharp with both sides having considerable losses.

In these advanced guard actions the Allies suffered from lack of air protection, and the enemy's Stuka dive-bombers—even if, as we are told, they are an obsolescent weapon—are still formidable when fighter protection cannot be given. It was obvious that in the earlier stages in the struggle for air supremacy the enemy would hold the advantage, having fully equipped aerodromes in Sicily and Sardinia in addition to such as he could use in Tunisia. The Allies, on the other hand, had in the first instance to bring all their fighter aircraft and ground organization by sea, and no doubt the first consignment of



BIZERTA AND TUNIS. Strongly entrenched in north-eastern Tunisia and enjoying a predominance in the air, the Axis forces put up a stern fight against the Anglo-American troops endeavouring to loosen their hold on Bizerta and Tunis. The black arrow shows main Allied attack. *By courtesy of The Daily Mail*

ANZACS IN BARDIA. On the same day as Tobruk was reoccupied by men of the Eighth Army, the little port of Bardia, between it and the Egyptian frontier, was captured by Imperial troops for the third time in the Libyan campaigns. This photograph shows a Maori patrol of the New Zealand forces advancing down the town's main street. The church, it will be seen, is still little harmed, but the houses on either side are pitted with shell and bomb splinters. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

RUSSIAN CENTRAL FRONT. In this sector the Red Army has maintained its pressure on Rzhev, and broken deeply into the German defences. This map shows the battle line at the beginning of Dec. 1942 and arrows indicate the direction of Soviet attacks. *By courtesy of The Times*

machines and first aerodromes to be equipped were those required for the protection of the further processes of disembarkation. Not until fresh consignments of aircraft had arrived and been disembarked could forward air bases be established for the protection of the advanced elements of the army which had moved out of fighter range of the base ports.

Obviously the building up of the Allies' air power must be a gradual process—perhaps even more gradual than the building up of the armies' transport and supply depots. Eventually the Allies should be able to establish superiority in short-range aircraft, since it would seem improbable that the Axis would be able to maintain aerodromes in effective operation in the restricted area they hold.

Meanwhile, it is of the first importance that our advanced forces should retain their hold on the ground they have secured for the deployment of the main army, whose advance is likely to be considerably slowed down by air attacks. Its heavy armaments and transport services are bound to present vulnerable targets. Fortunately, the long-range bombers of the Middle East Air Force, fighter bombers from Malta and the Navy can evidently do much to prevent the enemy rapidly developing counter-offensive potentialities.

The more we are told of the original landing in North Africa the greater must be our admiration for the part played by the Navy, and perhaps especially for the secrecy which was maintained. It will now be on the R.A.F. that the chief responsibility for opening the way for final success will fall, even though it will be the Army that will have the hard task of gathering the fruits. That it is not going to be an easy matter to evict the enemy from Tunis and Bizerta is, however, all too clear.

In Libya, while I write, Alexander is still closing up Montgomery's army for a new encounter with Rommel. Before this is published (some fortnight from now) we shall know how far he has succeeded, and what Rommel's real intentions are. Whether he intends to fight a decisive or merely a delaying action is at present uncertain; but it is hardly conceivable that he stands a chance of retrieving his disaster by any form of counter-stroke, though he may exact a heavy price from the 8th Army.

RUSSIA

Hoth's army, encircled in front of Stalingrad between the Don and the Volga, is still in danger of complete annihilation, but it has recovered from the first shock of surprise and has organized strong defences. It has evidently no intention of attempting to cut its way out of the ring, but means to hold its ground in hopes of relief.

It is improbable that the Russians will make further large captures of prisoners or material unless lack of supplies and munitions brings about wholesale surrender. They appear, however, to be maintaining their attacks and to be steadily, if slowly, gaining ground. Such pressure would tend to exhaust German supplies; and the efforts being made to send in reinforcements and supplies by air seem to indicate a real shortage. In view of their many attacks on Stalingrad it is improbable that the Germans can have accumulated great reserve stocks, and they probably have lost some of their main depots at Kalach. Dumps in forward areas in the outskirts of the city would, however, presumably be large; possibly it was to protect them that attacks were continued, after it must have been evident that they would be futile.

Timoshenko evidently intends to secure a position which a relief army would find it difficult to break through, and he seems to have made much progress westwards along the railways on both sides of the Don. The situation here, is, however, rather obscure, for there is little to indicate what is the strength or organization of the German forces he is encountering. They may be the nucleus of a relief army. Kotelnikovo on the Stalingrad-Novorossisk railway is a centre where one such might form.

On the Caucasus front German reports speak of Russian counter-attacks developing into a major offensive, but the Russians make no such claim. Any pressure that they are exercising certainly complicates the German problem; and should a collapse occur at Stalingrad the German position in the Mozdok region in particular would become precarious.

Zhukov's offensive on the Rzhev-Velikiye Luki front makes slow progress, but it has had remarkable success considering that it is attacking probably the most strongly entrenched part of the German front. German counter-attacks have been numerous and vigorous, but have obviously entailed the employment of important reserves and have been more costly than successful.

Clearly the Germans intend to hold Rzhev at all costs. Its capture would remove the block on the Moscow-Riga railway, the use of which would be of immense value to Zhukov, especially when heavy snow paralyses road transport. The lack of railway communications behind his front may make it difficult for him to maintain the weight of his offensive if Rzhev continues to hold out. The town is held by a large force, and must have ample supplies; so even if its communications have been cut it has great possibilities of prolonged defence.

The situation on this front also is obscure, but evidently it is causing the Germans great anxiety. Much is likely to depend on how the sheer fighting efficiency of the German troops is maintained under winter conditions after the experiences of last year. A major Russian success at any point would shake the stability of the whole German front.

THE FAR EAST

The persistent attempts by the Japanese to reinforce their detachments on Guadalcanal and at Buna have had practically no success, and have cost them further serious losses; loss of ships, both naval and transport, is, of course, a heavier blow than the loss of troops, though the drowning of large numbers from sunken transports may have its effect even on Japanese nerves.

The attack on Buna has evidently been greatly handicapped by lack of artillery, and the arrival of two howitzers by air may serve to expedite matters. Though the number is too small to produce crushing effect, they may help in the successive capture of small localities.

Now that we have been told the full extent of the Pearl Harbour disaster, its shattering effect on the whole Far Eastern situation will perhaps be more fully understood in this country. It gave Japan a completely free hand, though fortunately only for a limited time.

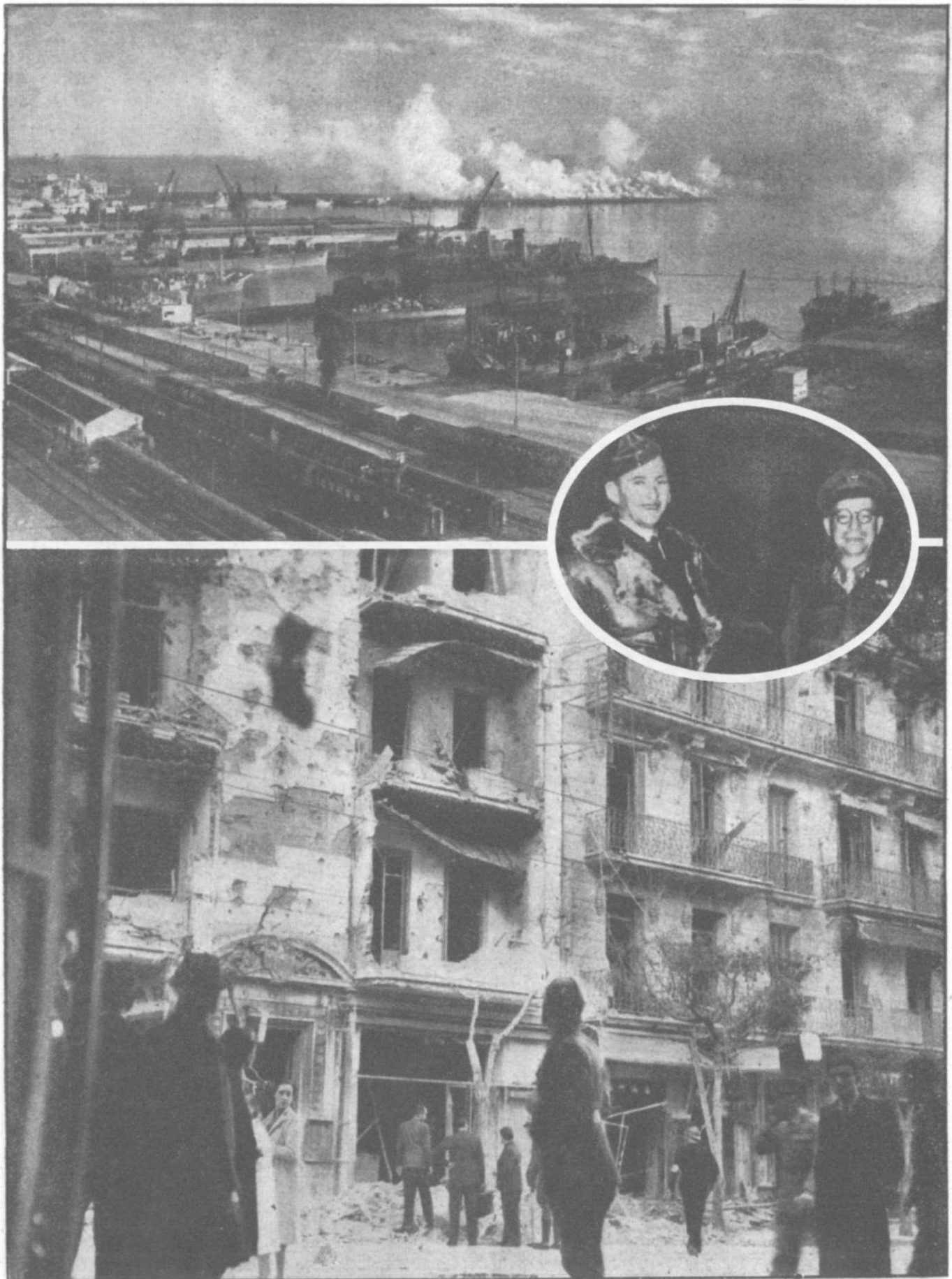
WINTER IN THE CAUCASUS brought some relief to the Soviet forces fighting for possession of the Georgian Highway. On Nov. 19, 1942 it was announced that the Germans had suffered a heavy defeat at Ordzhonikidze, some 5,000 of their men being slain, and an even greater number wounded. Red Army troops are here seen clearing a mountain road preparatory to their comrades' advance. *Photo, U.S.S.R. Official*

With the Allied Forces in French North Africa

IN CASABLANCA, great seaport of French Morocco, General Noguès, French Resident-General, and Maj.-Gen. G. S. Patton, commanding U.S. Western Task Force, attend a ceremony held in memory of American and French soldiers who had fallen in battle (top). Spahis (Moroccan troops) form a picturesque guard of honour. Inset, left to right, Maj.-Gen. L. R. Fredendall, commanding U.S. Central Task Force; Lt.-Gen. M. W. Clark, second-in-command to Gen. Eisenhower; Brig.-Gen. J. H. Doolittle, commander of U. S. Air Forces in N. Africa. Below, American motorized column drives eastward through Algeria.

Photos, Keystone, Planet News

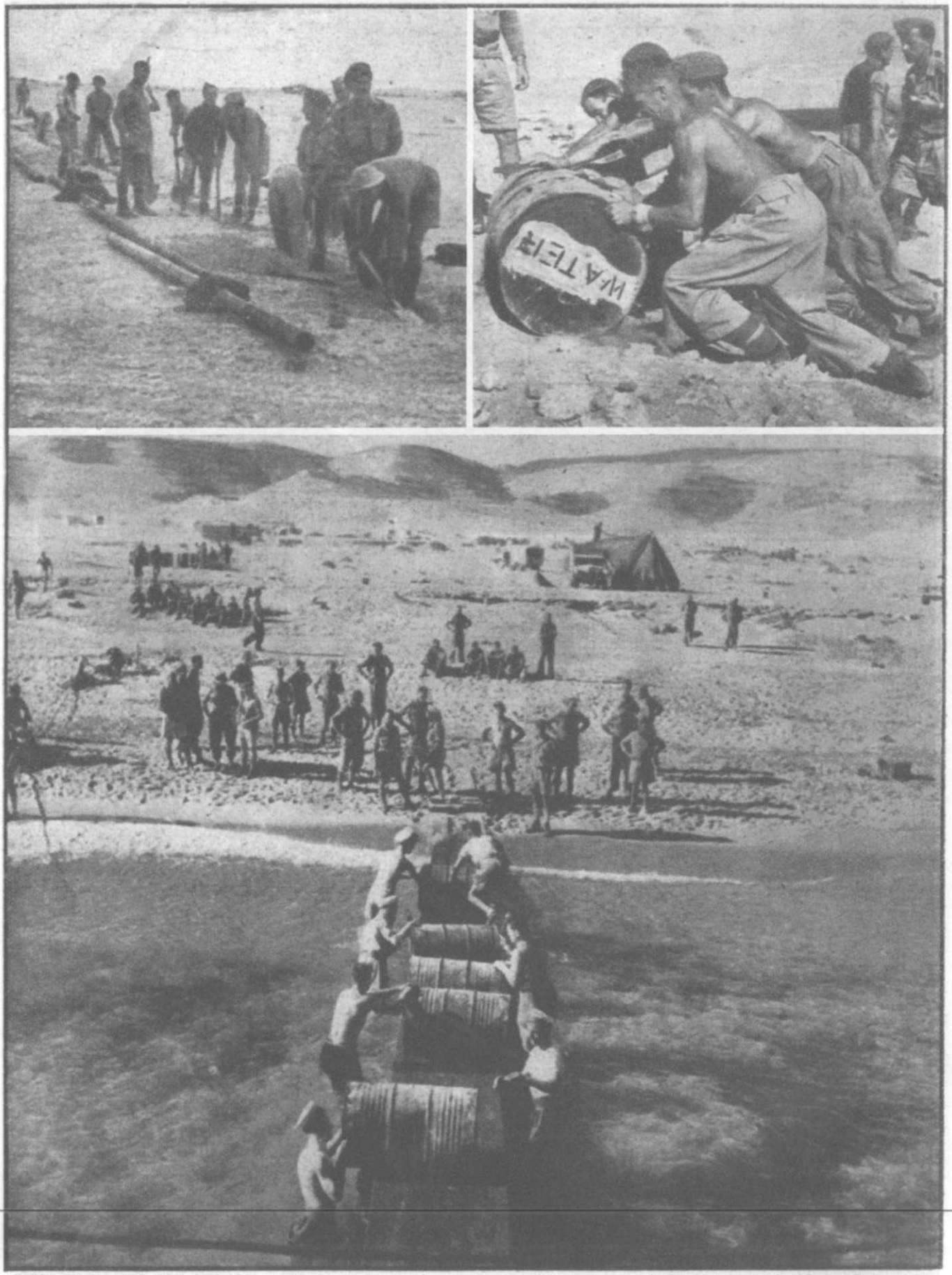
When the Luftwaffe Hit Back at Algiers



AIR WAR IN ALGIERS. Although the Axis ground forces were unable to contest the Allied landings in Morocco and Algeria, the Luftwaffe was soon in action. German dive-bombers attacked Allied transports in Algiers harbour, and top photo shows a smoke-screen being laid by naval craft to protect the Allied armada. Inset, Sir A. Tedder, Vice-Chief of Air Staff (left), and Maj.-Gen. L. H. Brereton, commanding U.S. 9th Air Force. Below, enemy bomb damage in Algiers.

Photos, British Official; Keystone

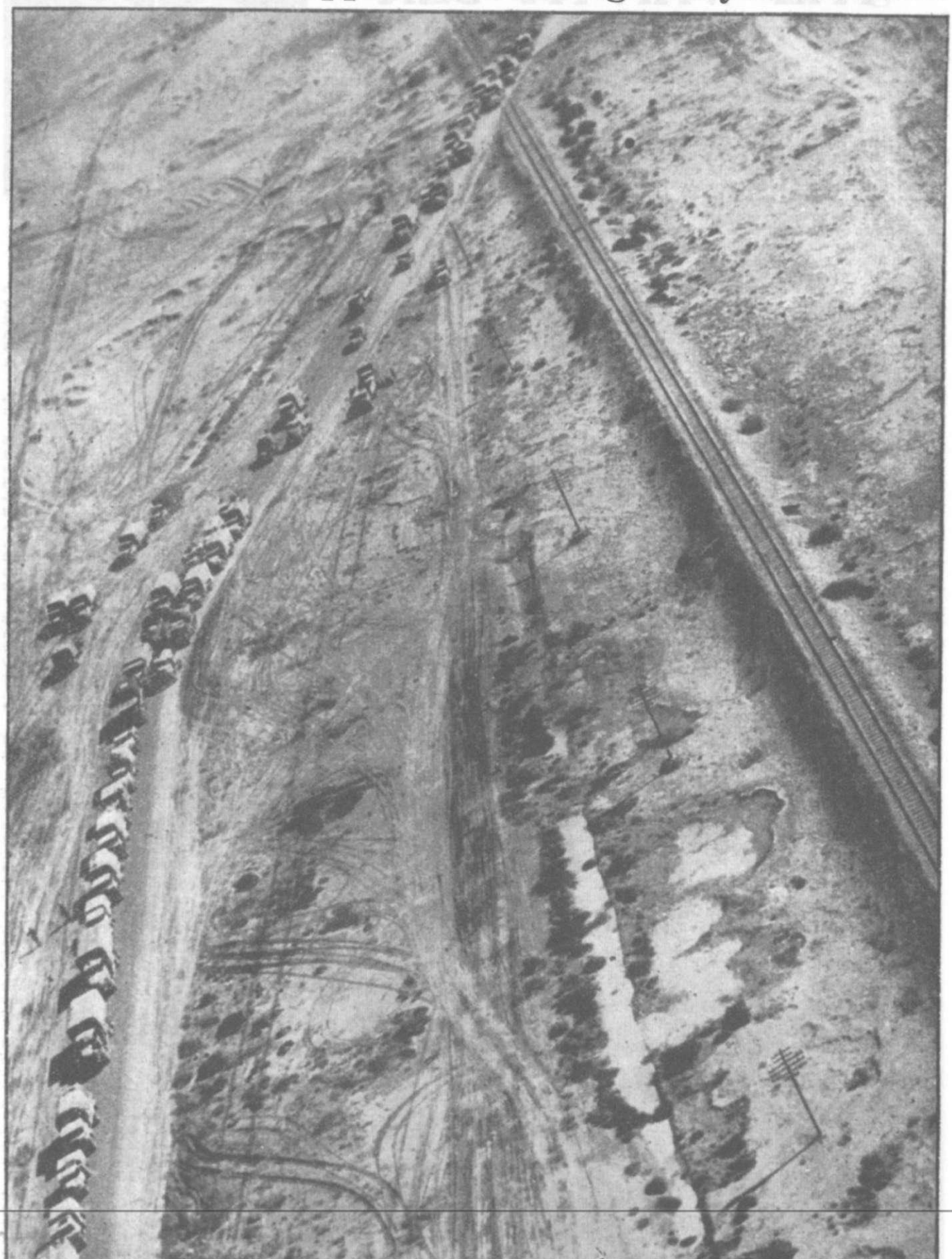
What So Precious as Water in the Desert ?



FRESH WATER FOR THE TROOPS constitutes a major problem in desert warfare. But during the 8th Army's pursuit of Rommel's retreating forces the Royal Navy took a hand, and at Sollum (on the Egypt-Libya frontier) landed 33,000 barrels brought from Alexandria. Below, part of this welcome shipment being run ashore, and (top right) rolling one of the barrels up the beach ; each barrel contained 44 gallons of water. Top left, Royal Engineers relaying the water pipe-line near El Daba.

Photos, British Official ; Crown Copyright

Speed the Supplies to Montgomery's Men!



IN PURSUIT OF ROMMEL the 8th Army pressed hard on the shattered Axis forces from Egypt into Libya. This photograph shows a huge convoy of British supply and ammunition lorries streaming westward along the road which runs beside the railway from the Nile Valley to near Tobruk. Strongly indicative of Allied air supremacy is the close grouping of the vehicles. By the beginning of Dec. 1942 Rommel had withdrawn to El Agheila, almost on the border of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

By borrowing a leaf from the German book and scuttling their ships at Toulon, the French disappointed Hitler's hopes of seizing them. From the rapidity with which a strong force of troops was thrown into the town, immediately making its way to the dockyard, it seems evident that the decision to take over the French fleet was not a sudden one. Fortunately, French plans were also of long standing, and, as far as can be ascertained, the only German prize of any value was a group of three destroyers which happened to be lying in a basin some distance from the rest of the fleet. Two cruisers also appeared from the air to be intact, but may have been damaged under water.

It is sad to reflect that had Vice-Admiral de Laborde and his officers taken their courage in their hands a fortnight earlier, they might have sailed for African waters and so placed themselves in a position to offer more than passive resistance to the invaders who hold France in subjection.

Various statements have appeared concerning the condition of the sunken ships. Obviously, any reliable report would need to be preceded by a thorough examination of the wrecks, for which purpose divers would have to be employed. It would appear that some ships were blown up, while others merely foundered or capsized. It seems to be generally accepted that the water in which they lie is comparatively shallow, so salvage should not be unduly difficult. But to refloat and refit so many ships full of complicated mechanism is bound to be a long job, occupying a considerable amount of labour and material. It must be concluded, therefore, that although the French ships cannot be written off as total losses, they are unlikely to be ready for active service for a very long time. If Hitler was counting upon them to reinforce his enfeebled allies in the Mediterranean, he must now be faced with a fresh problem.

It is generally believed that Mussolini, while ready to risk his light ships in escorting convoys to Tunisia and Tripolitania, regards his battleships as too precious to send to sea. On the rare occasions on which they have been sighted, they have invariably retired to port again at the first sign of danger.

In spite of this, three of them were put out of action at Taranto in the famous moonlight torpedo attack made by the Fleet Air Arm on November 11, 1940. Two years later, on December 5, 1942, American aircraft delivered a heavy bombing attack on Naples, another important naval base. A cruiser of the Attendolo type capsized, and a battleship received damage, though it is improbable that she was hit in a vital spot.

Should the situation become sufficiently desperate, Hitler may insist on the Italian battle fleet proceeding to sea to protect the convoys, on the arrival of which German troops in Africa depend. There are no German warships available for the purpose, the few that remain in service being either in Norwegian waters or in the Baltic. The squadron based on Trondheim, comprising the Tirpitz, Admiral Scheer, Lützow, Prinz Eugen and Admiral Hipper, has shown few signs of activity since it proceeded northward in July with the object of intercepting a convoy bound for Russia. A Soviet submarine claimed to have torpedoed the Tirpitz on that occasion, though there is no certainty that she was damaged.

In view of the fate of the Bismarck in May 1941 it is improbable that another sortie will be made into the Atlantic, for the chances of any considerable success in this direction are far less today than they were then.

The Navy and North Africa

It was revealed recently by Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, that the expedition to North Africa was organized in three separate forces. One, which sailed from the United States, was entirely an American responsibility; it was this unit that occupied Casablanca and other ports in French Morocco, disabling or sinking the battleship Jean Bart and other French warships which opposed the landings. The other two units, comprising both British and American troops, sailed from this country under the protection of the Royal Navy, with aid from ships of the Royal Canadian, Polish, Royal Norwegian and Royal Netherlands Navies, and proceeded to Oran and Algiers.

British warships lost in the course of the operations were the auxiliary aircraft-carrier Avenger, the destroyers Martin and Broke, the corvette Gardenia, the sloops Ibis, Hartland and Walney, the minesweeper Algerine, the depot ship Hecla, and the anti-aircraft escort vessel Tynwald. The Dutch lost a destroyer, the Isaac Sweers, and the Americans five naval transports. Compared with the results achieved, these losses must be regarded as trifling.

Capt. W. G. AGNEW, C.B. (left), and Lt. Cmdr. A. P. H. NOBLE, D.S.C., commanders respectively of the cruiser Aurora and destroyer Quentin, which played a prominent part in smashing an Axis convoy in the Mediterranean on Dec. 2, 1942. *Phillips, Keystone*

Though the Germans have contrived to assemble some 20,000 troops in Tunisia, they have suffered heavy loss in transporting them there. Not only have many ships been sunk by H.M. submarines, but twice in 48 hours convoys were intercepted by our surface warships.

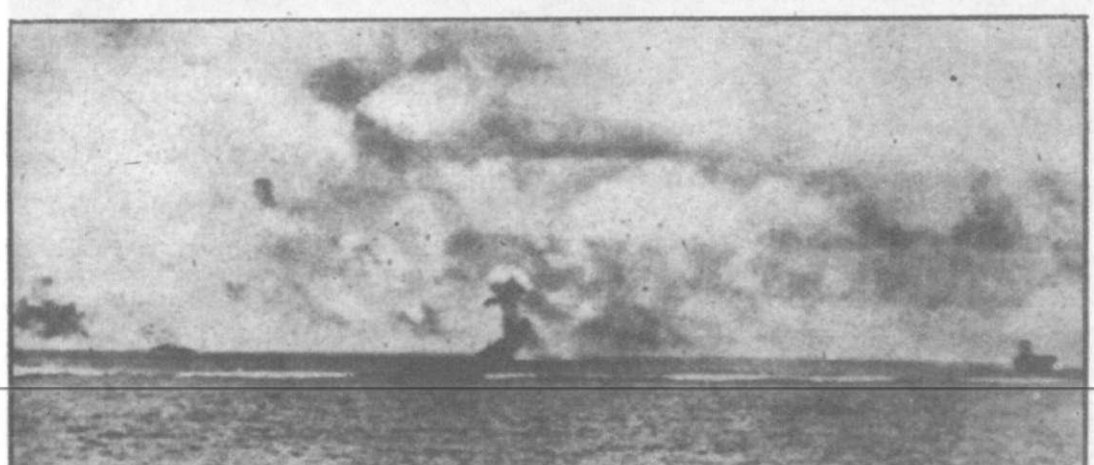
Shortly after midnight, December 1-2, 1942, a force under Rear-Admiral C. H. J. Harcourt, comprising H.M. cruisers Aurora, Sirius and Argonaut, and the destroyers Quentin and Quiberon, practically wiped out an enemy convoy proceeding from Italy to Tunisia. Although the convoy scattered and sought to cover its retreat with smoke-screens, four merchant vessels, at least two of which were troopships, and three destroyers were set on fire and destroyed. Admiral Harcourt summed up the whole situation afterwards when he made the signal: "Well done, everybody; I think we have helped the 1st Army."

On the night of December 2-3 light forces under Captain A. L. Poland, R.N., came in contact with another south-bound convoy which had been attacked shortly before by torpedo aircraft. In the earlier encounter two ships of mercantile type were destroyed, and in the second an Italian torpedo boat was sunk.

These engagements were no mere matter of chance, but were the fruit of careful planning and skilful leadership.

The United States Navy Department's official report on the Pearl Harbour disaster, made public on December 6 last, is a most interesting document. Out of eight battleships lying in port on December 7, 1941, Japanese torpedoes from the air so severely damaged five that they were either sunk or put out of action for some time, while the remaining three also received damage. Only one of these battleships, the Arizona, has had to be written off as a total loss, and with the exception of two destroyers, whose main and auxiliary machinery have been recovered, the various other warships sunk or damaged by the enemy attack have either been salved and repaired, or are now under salvage. Those ships which have been taken into dockyard hands for refit after salvage will be modernized before rejoining the fleet.

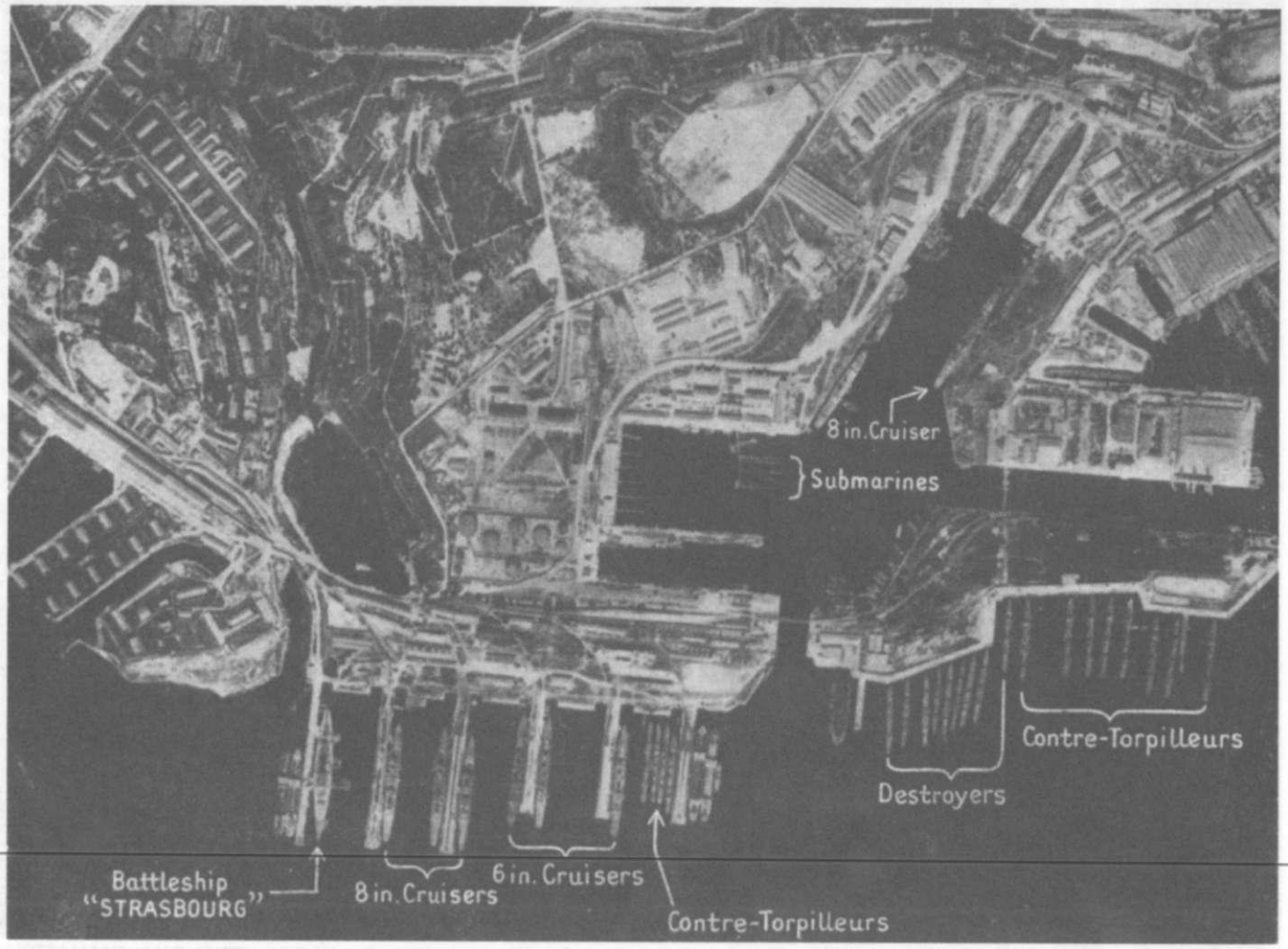
It is proof of the fine quality and spirit of the United States Navy that it should have recovered itself in so short a time from such a heavy blow. Moreover, in the last few months it has taken the initiative.



SEA-AND-AIR BATTLE OFF THE SOLOMONS. On the right an American aircraft-carrier is making a sharp turn to avoid Japanese attacks during a fierce engagement which began on Oct. 26, 1942, near the Santa Cruz Islands. In the centre an enemy plane is crashing on to a U.S. destroyer. On Nov. 1 the U.S. Navy Dept. announced that an aircraft-carrier and a destroyer had been lost in this battle. *Photo, New York Times Photo*

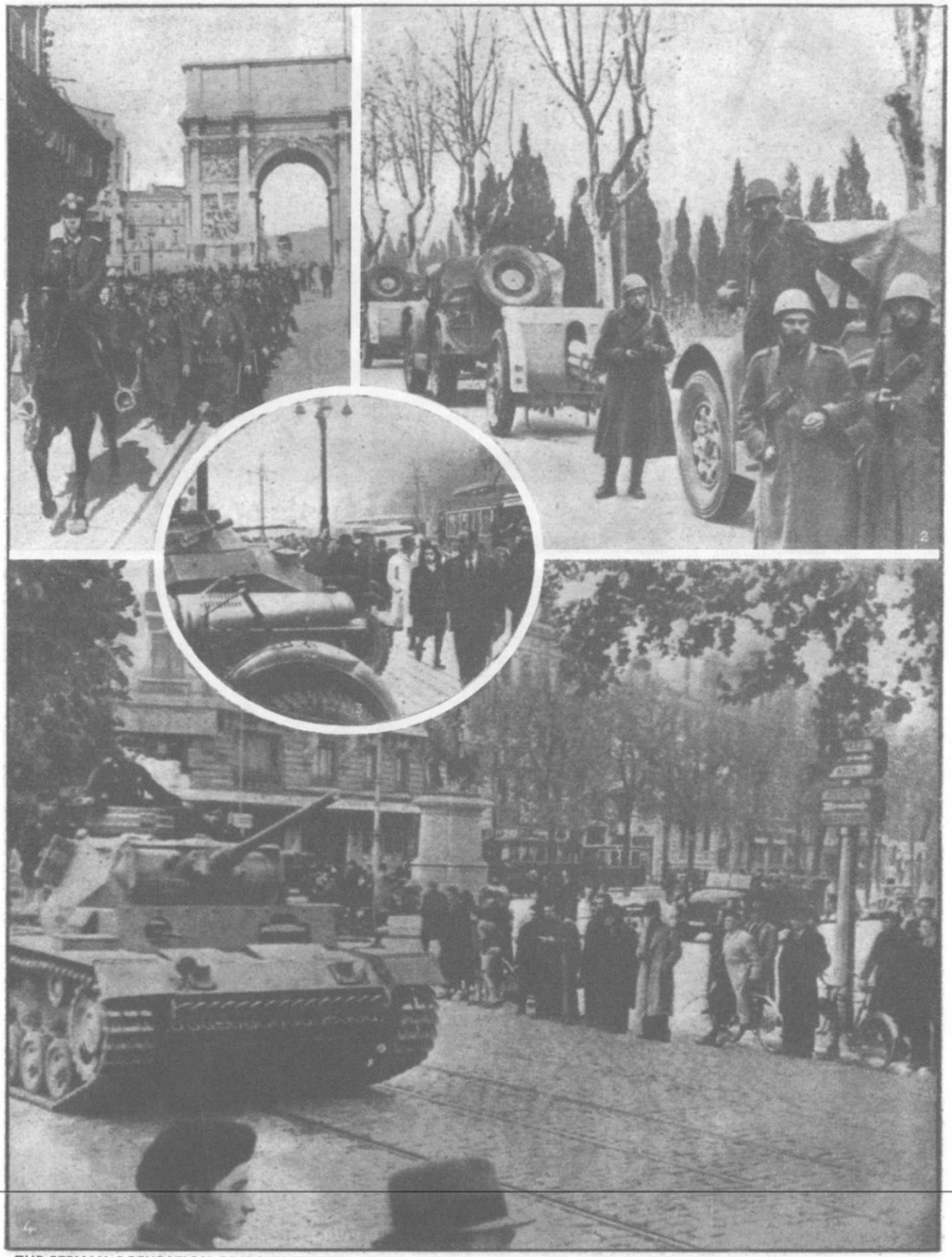
Out of Toulon's Smoke France Will Rise Again

ADM. DE LABORDE (above) gave the order to scuttle the French fleet at Toulon on Nov. 27, 1942, when the Germans were at the gates of the naval base. By so doing he vindicated the honour of France and also deprived the Axis of a powerful concentration of warships. On the next day the Fighting French Navy observed a one-minute silence in honour of their countrymen who were lost with their ships at Toulon. Flags were flown at half-mast ; right, French sailors lowering the tricolour in London.



THE FRENCH FLEET AT TOULON consisted of some 60 ships, including the battleships Dunkerque, Strasbourg, and Provence ; four 10,000-ton cruisers, three light cruisers, a seaplane-carrier, about 28 destroyers and *contre-torpilleurs* (a slightly larger type of destroyer), and some 20 submarines. This air view of the harbour, taken before the Axis occupation on Nov. 27, shows many of these ships in their berths. " From the flames and smoke of the explosions at Toulon," said Mr. Churchill on Nov. 29, " France will rise again." *Photos, British Official : Planet News, Sport & General*

'Occupy All France!' said Duce to Fuehrer



THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF VICHY FRANCE, which took place on Nov. 11, 1942, destroyed the last vestiges of Hitler's pretence that this part of France was a "free zone." 1, German infantry passing through the Arc de Triomphe in Marseilles. 2, The Italians were permitted by their German masters to make an excursion along the Riviera: a motorized detachment pauses on the road to Marseilles. 3, German vehicles on the famous Cannebière in Marseilles. 4, Enemy tank in Toulouse. *Photos, Associated Press*

In New Guinea They've Got the Japs on the Run

AUSTRALIANS AND AMERICANS IN NEW GUINEA, following their recapture of Kokoda on Nov. 2, 1942, were swift in their pursuit of the retreating Japanese. Australian troops entered Gona on Nov. 23 while U.S. forces hammered at Buna, the last remaining enemy stronghold on the coast. Top, cheery Australians wounded at Kokoda make their way back to the rear for treatment. Below left, Allied troops examining a captured Jap tank; and (right) an enemy landing-barge.

Photos, Associated Press

A Second Winter's Tale of Dreadful War

Winter's coming has brought no cessation of hostilities on the vast Russian front. On Nov. 19 the Red Army launched an attack in the Caucasus ; three days later it went over to the offensive at Stalingrad, and on Nov. 28 a third offensive was launched on the Moscow front.

LAST winter was bad enough for the German armies in Russia ; this winter may well be worse. Not only are the Russians fighting with still tremendous, seemingly undiminished, strength, but they are nerved to greater efforts by the consciousness of victories already won. The myth of Hitler's invincibility has been blown to pieces by Montgomery's guns in Egypt, by Timoshenko in the Caucasus and before Stalingrad, and by Zhukov in Central Russia.

How near the Germans were to defeat, even to disaster, in the campaign of last winter has been revealed by Hitler himself. In a speech to the Reichstag last April he admitted that " neither the German soldier, nor tanks, nor locomotives, were prepared for such intense cold." Nerves were at breaking-point, obedience wavered, and a sense of duty was lacking—these are all Hitler's own expressions—and in a few cases it was necessary for him to intervene. So " we mastered a fate that broke another man Napoleon 130 years ago."

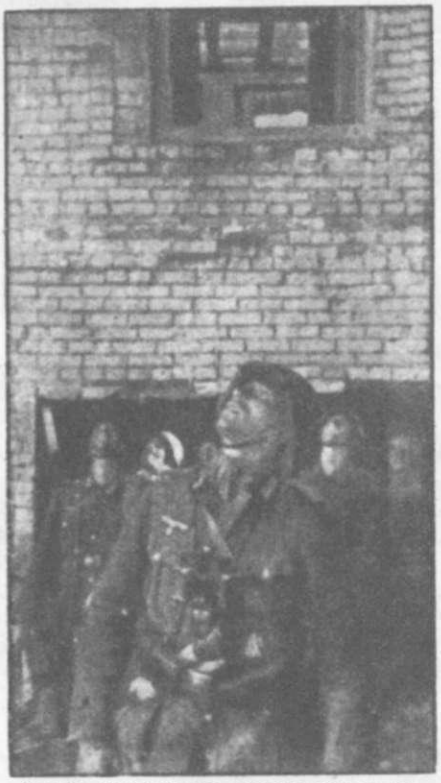
Goering, too, dilated upon the enormous difficulties which confronted the Germans. In a speech last May he spoke of the time when, after Hitler's " unheard-of victories, after the Germans had penetrated 1,500 kilometres and more into Russian space,"

" A new enemy fell upon us. Not the Russian divisions, not the Russian armies, not the Russian command, but the elements rose against us. Almost suddenly winter fell upon us, producing immense cold within three days—such a winter as has never probably been experienced in the history of such struggles. Rivers were frozen, swamps and lakes ; one white blanket of death was spread over the limitless country . . . The Russian was in our rear in the north, in the centre, in the south. Partisan detachments blew up everything. Maddening cold almost froze our troops. The cold hindered railway transport and the lines cracked with the cold, the locomotives could no longer move. For days the front remained without supplies, without ammunition, without food and without clothing. Out there the brave musketeer stood in the icy snow, his hands numb. When he touched the barrel of his rifle the skin of his fingers stuck to it. The motors failed, could no longer be started. Tanks got stuck in the deep snow. One thing piled on top of another . . ."

THAT is Goering's picture of the winter war of 1941 , in its main essentials it is a picture of that of 1942. True, so far the climatic conditions have not equalled those of last year, while Hitler's propagandists have maintained that the lessons of last year's campaign have been well learnt—that this year the preparations have been much more complete. Barracks have been built in many parts of occupied Russia. Huge quantities of furs have been purchased (or stolen) in all parts of Europe. Tens of thousands of skis have been bought to send to the Russian front : white hoods and cloaks, too. Vast quantities of bread, meat, fats and potatoes are being supplied every week by General Wietersheim, Hitler's First Quartermaster, who has been boosted as the " Ludendorff of the New Army." One fact we can be sure of ; that the German soldier at the front will be given the best of everything that Germany can produce. It is the civilians who will go short, and the civilians of the occupied countries will go shortest of all : they can starve so far as Hitler cares.

All the same, it is a bleak prospect for the Germans. In the north and central sectors they have towns and cities in which to winter, but their hold on these would seem to be uncertain, following Zhukov's offensive. In the south, in the Stalingrad sector, there are no cities, and most of the villages have been destroyed. In large measure the prolonged onslaught on Stalingrad was dictated by the necessity of obtaining winter quarters, since otherwise the attackers would be condemned to spend the winter in the empty, icy steppes. But Stalingrad still stands ; and the Germans are now falling back through a devastated countryside in which there is no warmth, little food, and less shelter. And everywhere the partisan detachments are active throughout the long winter nights. Behind the German lines there are millions of Russians, and every one of them is a foe made desperate and relentless by ferocious treatment.

But for the Russians, too, the prospect is of a bleak and hungry winter. Throughout



WARE SNIPERS IN STALINGRAD! Reproduced from the Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung, this photograph purports to show German shock troops looking up to detect any sign of Russian presence in the upper storeys of the largely demolished houses.

the country (reports Reuters Correspondent) the slogan is " everything for the front," and this means that the civilians in the rear must tighten their belts still more. At times they must go hungry ; they must do without central heating since all the fuel is required for the army and war industries ; they must do without comforts, even many of what we should call the necessities of life. Last year the Russians lost the Ukraine ; this year they have had to abandon the Kuban, richest remaining source of foodstuffs. These losses have but spurred them on to ever-greater effort. Nothing has been spared the Red Army. Vast quantities of skis and sledges have been turned out by the factories for the new ski army ; winter clothing, also, and heating equipment for gun-sites, dug-outs and billets. And all this not for " static hibernation " but for a vigorous and victorious offensive in the depths of winter.

In Moscow the Muscovites all through the summer have been collecting fuel, and in the squares there are great stacks of birch logs. In the allotments people have been working by moonlight to get the potatoes up before the frosts come. Although Moscow's young men have gone into the Army, although great numbers of its population are working now in factories hundreds of miles away in the Russia of the Urals and beyond, the capital city of the Soviets is still palpitating with life. Everywhere the mood is a confident one.

Much the same can be said of Leningrad, now preparing for its second winter siege. Old wooden houses have been dismantled for fuel ; each citizen has been required to prepare for the winter four cubic yards of wood for himself and two more for the community. Dozens of repair squads are active ; plumbing has been overhauled, substitute glass put into windows, methods of saving fuel publicized. " Winter is coming ! Prepare for frosts ! " comes from the radio at frequent intervals. Last winter the Leningraders suffered horribly from cold and privation : they are better prepared this year.

ON the whole, then, the Russians have the advantage : most important, they are fighting to liberate their own soil and on every hand they see signs that the tide of war is at last turning in their favour. The contrast between the invader and the invaded has been well depicted by A. T. Cholerton, The Daily Telegraph's correspondent in Moscow, in a dispatch published on Nov. 27. He writes of that new feature of war on the Russian front—the taking of large numbers of Nazi prisoners. They were astounded, he says ; they were in despair over their defeat. They were real fighting-men, and it would have been moving to see them had one not remembered " their cold, hard arrogance and their way of treating even the grand Don Cossack villagers as people of a lower race—slaves and chattels to be worked out, starving to death in trench and road building, and then flung out to die in the snows on the wide gale-swept steppes."

These arrogant " lord folk " of Hitler's grand army (went on Mr. Cholerton) may have been a bit troubled in their minds at not taking all of Stalingrad before the winter, and at being left out to face its icy gales in the naked steppe. But they seem to have felt very sure of themselves while out chasing the old Cossack men, young boys and women, and they did themselves pretty well in the matter of billets, making the ruined houses quite cosy with stolen mattresses and eiderdowns. They covered their own backs, too, with filched sheepskin coats and women's furs. Underneath they wore female shawls, jumpers and pullovers. In they roll, these prisoners, in their thousands and tens of thousands, often without escort and led by their own officers, some still trying to swagger.

AS they march by to the prisoner-of-war camps they are watched by their victims and pre-ordained slaves.

In those little local crowds of peasants, who have been first strafed from the air, then fought over, and then ignobly dragooned in the past four months, there are armed partisans whose brothers have been tortured and then hanged and strangled by the neck without any merciful six-foot drop. There are Russian regulars, too, armed with tommy-guns, and feeling big, broad and at ease in their sheepskin caps, their sheepskin coats, their big, clumsy felt high-boots—providential equipment, wearing which one knows one can march to hell without getting frostbite, unless one is left out in the open wounded.

It speaks well for the Russian " tommies " who, except in the heat of battle, are rather easy-going, habitually rather humble-minded folk, that they have taken prisoner and left alive so many scores of thousands of these cocky Prussians.

And to think of it, that " these wretches, at least their airmen, have during the past few weeks dropped down millions of leaflets telling the Stalingrad garrison and the huge adjacent Russian armies that they were all utterly encircled and destroyed ! "

Grim Battle in Russia's Snowbound Landscape

THIS RUSSIAN MARKSMAN, a member of an anti-tank crew defending positions from a blockhouse, maintains a vigilant watch, never taking his eyes from his gunsights during a prolonged attack by the enemy. In front and behind him are stores of ammunition.

SOVIET INFANTRYMEN, led by one of their comrades carrying a light machine-gun, clear an enemy trench during patrol activity on the central front. Heavy snowstorms in this sector at the beginning of Dec. 1942 added to the Germans' difficulties.

RUSSIANS ADVANCING to the N.W. and S.W. of Stalingrad in Nov. 1942 cut off large German forces which had long been hammering at that city. By the first week of December the enemy had lost many important heights, and the trapped Nazi divisions were reported to be clinging to every position favourable to defence.

Right, Russian tanks going in to attack an enemy position near Stalingrad. In their efforts to extricate themselves from the giant Soviet trap between the Volga and the Don the Germans improvised sledges, for frost and snow paralysed mechanical transport. Above, the retreating enemy moving across the snow with their sledges—a picture suggestive of Napoleon's retreat in 1812.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official; Planet News, Keystone

In Italy Is Fascism Riding for a Fall?

Will Italy crash—and when, and how? These are questions that men are asking everywhere, following the crushing defeats of her armies in Abyssinina and in Libya and the series of devastating air raids on Genoa, Milan, Turin and Naples. In this specially contributed article Dr. EDGAR STERN-RUBARTH endeavours to interpret the writing on the wall.

IT is said that when Mussolini finally agreed in 1934 to grant Hitler an interview at Venice, he placed the Fuehrer, when they came to be photographed, in such a position that the Hebrew letters on the Decalogue Tables held by the Lion of St. Mark appeared just over the head of the world's Jew-baiter No. 1. Today Il Duce no longer dares to make jokes of any kind about the man he then despised as his imitator. He allowed himself to be tied hand and foot when he jumped on France's back.

What then appeared to be an easy racket for squeezing a New Roman Empire out of a Nazi-conquered world has since been transformed into the greatest disaster to befall a would-be world power for the last thousand years. Yet, such is the present attitude of the United Nations that there is still a loophole by which Italy, if not Mussolini and his Blackshirts, may escape; and both the Fascists and their Italian opponents within and outside Italy know it. This is the fact behind all the unrest, all the moves and counter-moves, observed in Rome of late, ever since Mussolini began to "liquidate" or cashier such men as Balbo, Badoglio and Cavagnari, and started to "purge" his own party, evicting from it in the summer months of this year no fewer than 66,000 members. Many of the victims were high officials—among them more than two-thirds of the 94 prefects (provincial governors), judges, civil servants and provincial secretaries of the Fascist Party. His purge did not stop at some of the greatest industrialists, landowners and nobles of the kingdom; the Duce even tried to "cleanse" the Forces. But there he encountered opposition too strong for a deflated dictator . . .

This opposition was not provoked by disagreement with the bitter necessity of uprooting graft, corruption, profiteering and all the other ugly phenomena of a system of wanton rule. It was due to other considerations. When Crown Prince Umberto recently wrested his A.D.C., Colonel Granuzzi, from the clutches of the O.V.R.A. (secret police) which wanted to shoot him and other high officers for "high treason," it was obviously because a large and increasingly influential portion of the Italian leadership and people has begun to interpret high treason in terms diametrically different from those of the orthodox Fascists. In conformity with the 600,000 Italians in the U.S.A. now freed from the stigma of enemy status, who are preparing another Garibaldi Legion for the liberation of their homeland, and with other hundreds of thousands elsewhere, they see Italy betrayed by "one man," the ambitious would-be Caesar and his minions.

THEY have good reason for adopting that attitude. In Rome, near the Piazza del Popolo, one of the most famous barracks is occupied by a German regiment; visitors at the Palazzo Venezia must obtain first a German permit, after passing close scrutiny by Hitler's Gestapo; the German Embassy, with four departments representing the main functions of a government, rules over all but the provincial administration of the country; Field-Marshal Kesselring, Goering's deputy, commands the air all over the "Mare Nostrum" and Italy herself (leaving Italian cities and industries denuded of A.A. guns); and Rommel was forced on the Italians as Supreme Commander over the whole Mediterranean sphere only a few weeks ago, at the height of his triumph. Gestapo officials sit in every central and local government department; Sicily is wholly in the grasp of the Nazi Luftwaffe; and since Allied blows have begun to fall on the other side of Italy's waters, Nazi generals, headed by the German Army Chief, Keitel, have appeared in Rome itself in order to tighten their grip.

MR. CHURCHILL TO THE ITALIANS

OUR operations in French N. Africa should enable us to bring the weight of the war home to the Italian Fascist State in a manner not hitherto dreamed of by its guilty leaders or, still less, by the unfortunate people Mussolini has led, exploited and disgraced. Already the centres of war industry in N. Italy are being subjected to harder treatment than any of our cities experienced in the winter of 1940. But if the enemy should in due course be blasted from the Tunisian tip—which is our aim—the whole of the south of Italy, all the naval bases, and all the munition establishments and other military objectives wherever situated will be brought under a prolonged, scientific and shattering air attack. It is for the Italian people, forty million of them, to say whether they want this terrible thing to happen to their country or not.

—*From the Premier's broadcast, Nov. 29, 1942.*

ITALY'S economic life had long been completely in the German grasp, depending as it does on a regular flow of at least 12 million tons of coal a year from Germany—under peace conditions—and forced to yield hundreds of thousands of skilled workers to Germany. Resistance on the part of Italian industrialists was hopeless from the beginning. Under a cleverly devised system of contracts, they had to let all their modern, efficient plants fall under Nazi domination. Numerous world-famous Italian plants (the Ansaldo, Montecatini, Brescia, Caproni, Breda, Pirelli, etc.) have fallen into the maw of Goering's huge combine, the Ruhr magnates and the German Dye Trust, who either took them over outright by obtaining the majority of the shares or relegated them to the position of spare-part-making subsidiaries. In some cases, as had been done already in France, whole factories, with their engineers, foremen and workers, were transferred to Germany. The Nazis have requisitioned the repair shops of Italy's railways. They have stolen so much of Italy's agricultural produce that on her rich soil rations have to be lower than anywhere except in starving Greece and Poland. Italy has even to go begging for timber in Finland, again giving foodstuffs in exchange, since her armies failed to subdue Yugoslavia whence she used to import it.

It is to be expected that, in these circumstances, there is not much love lost between the Italian people and the masters whom Mussolini's megalomania has foisted upon them. But after the loss by Rommel of what little had remained of Italy's African Empire, after the invasion by an Anglo-American armada and air force of her own waters, what can Italy do about it?

THAT question was pondered, and answered, long before the blow fell. Loosely knit at first, a *camarilla* had developed, centring on the Royal House: the generals and admirals, the nobility, estate owners, financiers, industrialists and, with the exception of the Archbishops of Naples and Milan, the high clergy, had all come to the conclusion that Fascism spelt ruin—either way; and now a second opposition group is forming among the "Traditionalists" and Youthful Radicals of the Fascist party itself. With a victorious Axis, Italy would come under Hitler's heel, as a mere puppet-state, run and exploited by the "Great Ally"; with a defeat of Hitler, she would have to share his doom . . . Unless, of course, she could desert the Axis cause in time. Quite a number of peace feelers have been put out during the last year, by way of Vatican circles favouring the "Latin Bloc" idea, anti-Fascists in exile, and relatives of the Italian royal family.

There seemed, however, to be no silver lining on the clouded horizon while Mussolini lorded it inside the country. Yet, Italy's army leaders have made a move that may have far-reaching consequences: when the new Mediterranean situation arose they declined all German help for the defence of their own soil. Forming new armies—Italy desires to defend herself alone, if need be by withdrawing from the Dalmatian coast, and even leaving Sicily and Sardinia unprotected but for the Luftwaffe. Yet Hitler, as afraid of his "unprotected" allies as of the enemy, is pouring divisions across the Brenner.

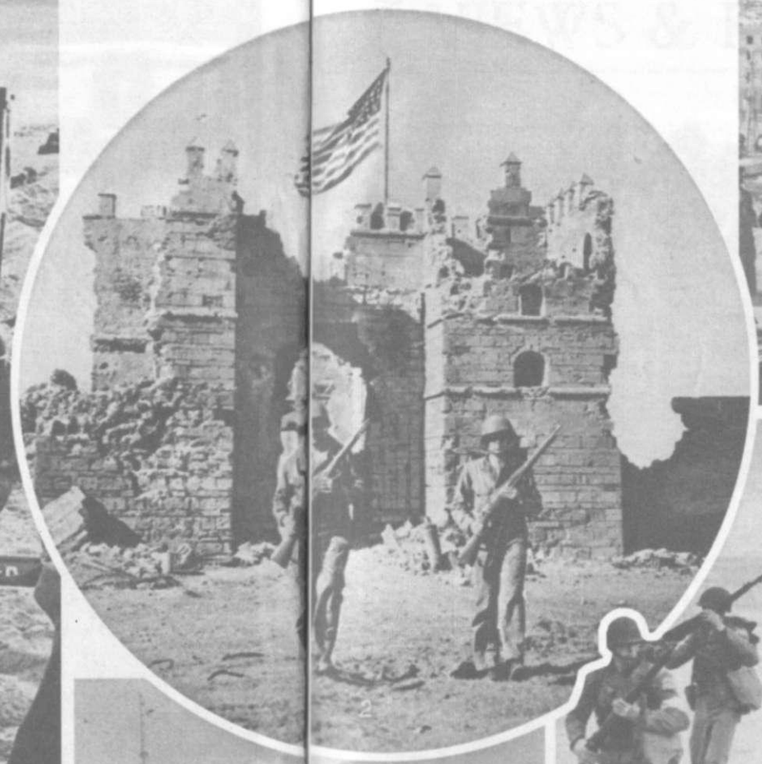
TO be on the safe side, however, a few weeks ago tens of thousands of workers of his Todt Organization began to build a "South Wall"—along the Italian border. The Fuehrer may envisage an Allied assault somewhere on southern Italian territory after the ultimatum delivered by the R.A.F., whose blows have been felt by Genoa, Milan, Turin, and Naples, and among other disasters provoked sanguinary clashes between a powerful underground movement and Fascist gunmen. He may fear a revolution that would smash the whole Fascist machinery and resurrect a humane, democratic Italy who would turn against her seducer. His assumptions may well be correct. Certainly a large part of the Italian population already sees not us but him as the enemy; they may soon be the majority.

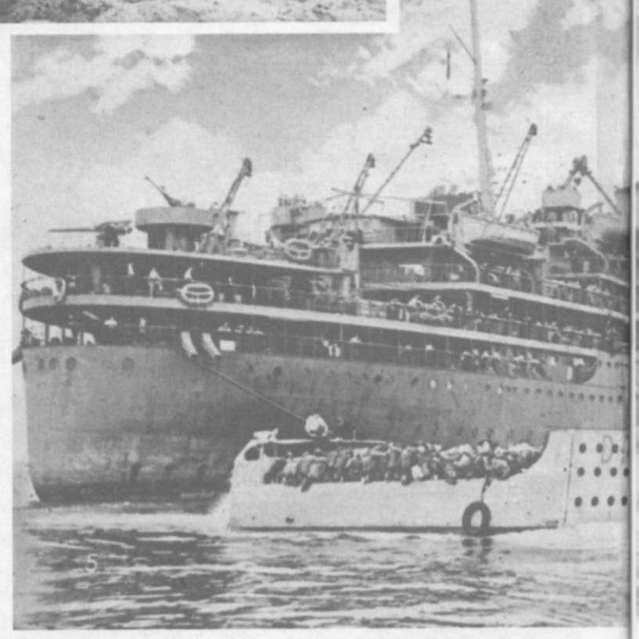
HUNGRY ITALY cultivates every inch of her soil, and even the flowerbeds in Italian cities are being utilized to produce food. This photo shows wheat growing in the Piazza del Municipio, one of the main squares of Naples. *Photo, Keystone*

Photo, British Official;

Leader of Britain's 'Crusaders'

In command of our First Army in North Africa is fifty-year-old Lt.-Gen. Kenneth Arthur Noel Anderson, C.B., M.C. The First Army has for its badge the " Crusader " flash. To quote from the Order of the Day issued when it was introduced last summer, " Just as of old the Crusaders wore on their shields the sign of the Cross . . . so we carry this emblem to show our unity of purpose in the dedication of ourselves to the rescue of Europe from the grip of barbarism . . ."





North Africa Invaded by the Allies

In all history there has been no such armada as that which landed General Eisenhower's Allied Army on the shores of Morocco and Algeria. 1, Guns carried inshore by landing-craft being manhandled up the beach near Algiers. 2, Above an old fort blasted into surrender by dive-bombers of the U.S. navy, "Old Glory" flies in triumph. 3, British 1st Army paratroops all smiles at Algiers.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Keystone

They Came to Conquer, Remain as Friends

Fortunately, French resistance to the Anglo-American invasion was short-lived, and the good accord that was erelong established is witnessed by this scene (4) of the American and British flags being hoisted over Allied H.Q., while a French guard of honour salutes. 5, One of the 500 transports which brought the troops across the Atlantic. 6 and 7, American troops coming ashore at Arzeu, near Oran.

America Comes to Africa

Photos, Keystone

Along the dusty highway skirting the Atlantic coast, American soldiers march from Fedala to Casablanca, the great naval base which, after some stiff fighting, surrendered to the Allies on Nov. 11, 1942. Arabs on mules and a very superior-looking camel give an oriental touch to the scene. In the lower photograph more of General Eisenhower's warriors move out to battle up a cactus-fringed road.

VIEWS & REVIEWS Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

IN 1886, when Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield joined the Royal Navy, the British nation considered its first line of defence perfect. A few years before it had been shouting, in defiance of Tsarist Russia :

> We've got the ships,
> We've got the men,
> We've got the money, too !

If it had known the truth about our ships and men as it is revealed in Lord Chatfield's book The Navy and Defence (Heinemann, 15s.), it would not have slept so well o' nights.

In half a century great changes have been made. It is due to Lord Chatfield and a few more like him—never very many—that those changes have almost all been improvements. The Navy has been transformed since he passed out of the Britannia. It certainly needed transformation. He tells the story in a straightforward, sailor-like style, throwing in frequent references to his domestic life, telegrams announcing births of children, troubles with furnished houses ; and telling often, too, how he got a little bit of shooting or stuck pigs or made a century at cricket. All of which makes it a pleasantly human record as well as one of historical value.

The bearded men who commanded our ships in those days had plenty of individuality. They were, many of them, " powerful personalities," but few of them were mentally alert. When they combined intellect with character, they tended to be intolerant and quarrelsome, as Jacky Fisher and Percy Scott were. To those two Lord Chatfield gives the chief credit for " changing the whole fighting outlook of the Navy " ; but he admits that Fisher was too headlong in his methods, sometimes even brutal, and that Scott " had a cocksure manner which brooked no argument and added to an unpopularity created by a forceful ' manner ' of pushing his wares."

Naval officers at that period were mostly inclined to suspect and dislike innovations. They felt uncomfortable if it was suggested they should get out of their old ruts, use their minds, alter their methods. One cause of this was that in general they drank too much. When, as a young gunnery officer, Lieut. Chatfield introduced many much-needed reforms in a ship which had an inefficient captain and an antiquated second-in-command, he received a certificate, not commending his good work, as he expected, but merely saying he had " conducted himself with sobriety," as if that was very unusual.

WHEN he got his first ship as midshipman, the hard drinking that went on in the gunroom was " not untypical." The sub-lieutenant in charge was " not infrequently drunk," and the other officers the same. The boy's first evening taught him what to expect. After dinner another sub-lieutenant rushed in, " pursued by the Captain's orderly whom he had just insulted. His first act was to raise his walking-stick and sweep all the tumblers, wine-glasses and decanters off the table. Glass flew in all directions. He then called to the waiters in a drunken voice to open the trap-hatch to the pantry, a small opening about two feet square. With a cry to the frightened mess-boys in the pantry, ' Catch me or I'll kill you,' he then ran and dived head foremost through the trap-hatch, amazingly without hurting himself severely."

With such examples before them, the seamen for the most part drank hard, broke their leave, and committed petty offences against discipline. When shore leave was granted patrols had to be landed to keep order, stop fights, arrest drunken men. " It is good to compare the fine yet imperfect material of those days with the highly-educated, self-respecting seamen that have now been developed—to me the finest representatives of our countrymen. Drunkenness is almost unknown among them, and leave-breaking is looked down upon (instead of being almost the fashion) and occurs comparatively seldom."

This has largely been brought about by the change in the ships. The type of man who " went aloft in a gale at night or hauled on the main brace or sheet without encouragement because his life depended on it " has become a skilled seaman-mechanic, able to use and repair delicate machinery. The

THE Navy & Defence

" trusty carthorse has given place to the Derby winner." This has made it necessary to alter methods of handling the lower deck and the spirit in which they are led and trusted. " The modern seaman may be more critical of those who command him, require greater care, attention and comfort, but well handled you can get more out of him because he has more to give."

YET Lord Chatfield recognizes that " to live a sailor's life in a ship of war is hard and trying. He has none of the comforts known to the civilian, or indeed to the other fighting Services. His work is unregulated by the clock, because he must cope with weather and emergencies which happen only on the seas. No sailor can go to his hammock with certainty that he will not be roused in the night. Returning from wet and cold work in a boat, no hot bath and armchair await him, nor does the barrack gate stand ajar for him to join his family in the evening. He sits at meals on a hard wooden form at the wooden mess-table . . . No individual could live a contented life under the White Ensign unless he was trained to it from boyhood, and had the spirit of comradeship and unselfish service impressed on him in his malleable teens."

The A.B. is good-tempered, " because ill-temper in a ship does not pay and speedily

NAVAL CADETS at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, receiving instruction in a model of the rigging of the battleship H.M.S. Nelson's mainmast. *Photo, Topical Press*

LORD CHATFIELD, whose book The Navy and Defence, reviewed in this page, was Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence, 1939-40. *Photo, Sport & General*

leads to ruin." He is cheerful and optimistic " because he must so often live on hope." Lord Chatfield has found it of absorbing interest to command seamen. He knows they like " a firm but just hand over them, the unruly punished, the well-conducted rewarded." The portrait he draws does equal credit to them and to him.

There has been change too in the relations between the Navy and the Admiralty. Even in 1919 they were " poles apart." The Board seemed to be separated altogether from the sailor, it was " a body that wore top-hats and was his permanent enemy." That was improved by making our Navy Department less bureaucratic, substituting naval private secretaries for civil servants, creating a better understanding between the latter and the men in the ships.

Some very grave and dangerous defects in the Admiralty system during the 1914 war Lord Chatfield exposes in his account of the poor-quality shells supplied to the Fleet and used with weak effect at the Dogger Bank and in the Battle of Jutland. Our gunnery was better than that of the Germans, but they said our shells were " laughable," and they were right. The officials in Whitehall stuck to it that there was nothing wrong. Only when trials had proved the contrary could they be made to give the Navy shells that would pierce armour as those of the enemy did.

SOMEONE ought to have been hanged for this.. Beatty wrote a letter to be published if he was killed, telling where the blame lay. But he was not killed, and the letter did not appear. A report made by Lord Chatfield raised the question whether an inquiry should be held and those who had so grossly failed in judgement brought to book. It was decided to let the matter rest, since " an inquiry would inevitably drag into its list of witnesses all kinds of personalities." So, to save a few prominent people, the folly which had lost so many lives and ships was overlooked. Social considerations overcame national. The guilty escaped scot-free.

The Admiralty erred also when it announced during the first stage of Jutland that the German Battle Fleet was not at sea ; but this did not much affect the course of the battle, though some ships came under very heavy fire and suffered severe damage. Lord Chatfield's account of the engagement is vivid and exciting, though there are points in it which make me feel a little uneasy. For instance, he attributes to chance the silhouetting of our ships against a clear sky and the enveloping of the enemy's in the gloom of a dull grey sky. Surely there was more than chance in this ? Again, he mentions that an order given by him to alter course was " misheard." Alarming to think such a thing could happen during a critical action !

Bizerta's Significance in Tomorrow's Strategy

Very much in the news is Bizerta, the great French base in Tunisia which was seized by the Axis in mid-November. Some conception of its importance to the one side and the other is provided by this article by Capt. FRANK H. SHAW.

UNLIKE tragic Singapore, Bizerta—the most important port between Algiers and Alexandria—is strongly defended against attack from the landward side as well as from the sea; and the slowing-up of our First Army's advance to the occupation of Tunisia was not surprising in view of the circumstances. The French have always been masters of fortification, and when Admiral Muselier was put in supreme command of the defences of this vital base, he employed excellent craftsmen to make it as nearly impregnable as might be. Heavy batteries—their guns having a range of over 25 miles—command all land approaches from south and west. Similar weapons dominate the narrows between this pointing finger of territory and Sicily. Attack from the sea by the United Nations might be costly in a high degree: it is an accepted fact that ships are almost impotent against fixed defences.

"Was *this* the face that launched a thousand ships?" he quotes. To gain a correct impression of the outstanding value of Bizerta, however, one must look beneath its mediocre surface. It is far more vital to Mediterranean strategy than ever Singapore was to the Pacific, for it commands one of the most important stretches of sea-water in the world, one that is next in importance to the English Channel. Admiral Muselier transformed it into a most formidable arsenal, for not only was this distinguished French sailor responsible for its naval efficiency, but he was placed in supreme charge of its air facilities; and the present war is proving daily that sea-power is dependent on air-power for continued potency. He worked well, and established airfields of unique value. Many of these are already in Allied hands: each fresh capture must bring added qualms to Axis hearts. Once we have secured air-supremacy in this

BIZERTA, key-point of N. Tunisia, was occupied by Axis troops, largely airborne, following the Allied occupation of Algeria. By the end of November it was reported that some 20,000 of the enemy had reached the Bizerta-Tunis area. This photo shows the waterway that connects the outer harbour with the inner lake. (See diagram opposite.) *Photo, E.N.A.*

But Bizerta and the adjoining country form a prize worth winning—and winning quickly. This very considerable naval base and airport is nothing less than a pistol pointed at Italy's heart. With Bizerta and Tunis—which latter city possesses at Goletta a notable harbour—in our hands, Mussolini's position would become well-nigh desperate.

NOT that, at first glance, Bizerta impresses an observer as being anything extraordinary: it is a typically shabby French colonial city. The French are not—they never were—really good colonists; and this town which at present commands the whole world's interest is uninspiring. It is the usual North African blend of east and west: tawdry, dishevelled, none too sanitary; where veiled women rub shoulders with ex-Parisian cocottes parading their slightly bedraggled finery along neglected streets. None the less, it is the focal centre of some of the richest territories along the entire North African littoral: Tunisia is a rich country, and, properly handled—the French only exploited it—its mineral and vegetable wealth would be incalculable.

Even so, a first glance makes for disappointment. Kipling, in his Village that Voted the Earth was Flat, expressed amazement that any place that had made so much history as Huckley should be so mean.

vicinity, the annihilation of Italy, as an Axis accomplice, follows as a matter of course. The narrows, between Bizerta and Sicily are roughly 150 miles wide; and with the exception of the negligible Straits of Messina, form the only channel between the Western Mediterranean and the Eastern.

Every ship steaming east and west between Gibraltar and Port Said must negotiate this narrow stretch of water, which is seldom rendered unobservable, especially from the air. By virtue of its narrowness, this short stretch can easily be crossed by Axis sea-transport under cover of darkness; and were Axis shipping available, which it is not, to reinforce Bizerta and all Tunisia by wholesale, would be a comparatively simple matter. That is why haste is the essence of the contract in our attempts to subjugate the region. Working frantically, running a shuttle service from Palermo to Bizerta, loading and unloading at top speed, an entire army with its heaviest equipment might be thrown into Tunisia in a dog-watch almost. The port is equipped to deal with such an inrush: Admiral Muselier and his consultants saw to that. Its dock facilities are almost unique; and the approaches to the port itself lend themselves to a baffling tactical use: the whole entrance can be mined and boomed without great difficulty.

Any surface fleet desirous of denying this passage to the Axis forces would be liable to relentless attack by U-boat and from the air, by U-boats based on Bizerta itself and the Sicilian ports, by aircraft flying not only from Sicilian and Southern Italian airfields but also from Pantellaria—the rocky islet lying roughly midway between Malta and Bizerta. Pantellaria is to Mussolini what the Maginot Line was to France: a strategic certainty.

But with Bizerta and Tunisia as a whole in Allied hands Pantellaria loses all its value: it can be dominated night and day, winter and summer, by Allied forces. So, too, do the Sicilian airfields lose their value: Allied aircraft operating from Bizerta's spacious fields might blast these strongpoints out of existence, and so annul all previous threats to the seaborne traffic of the United Nations.

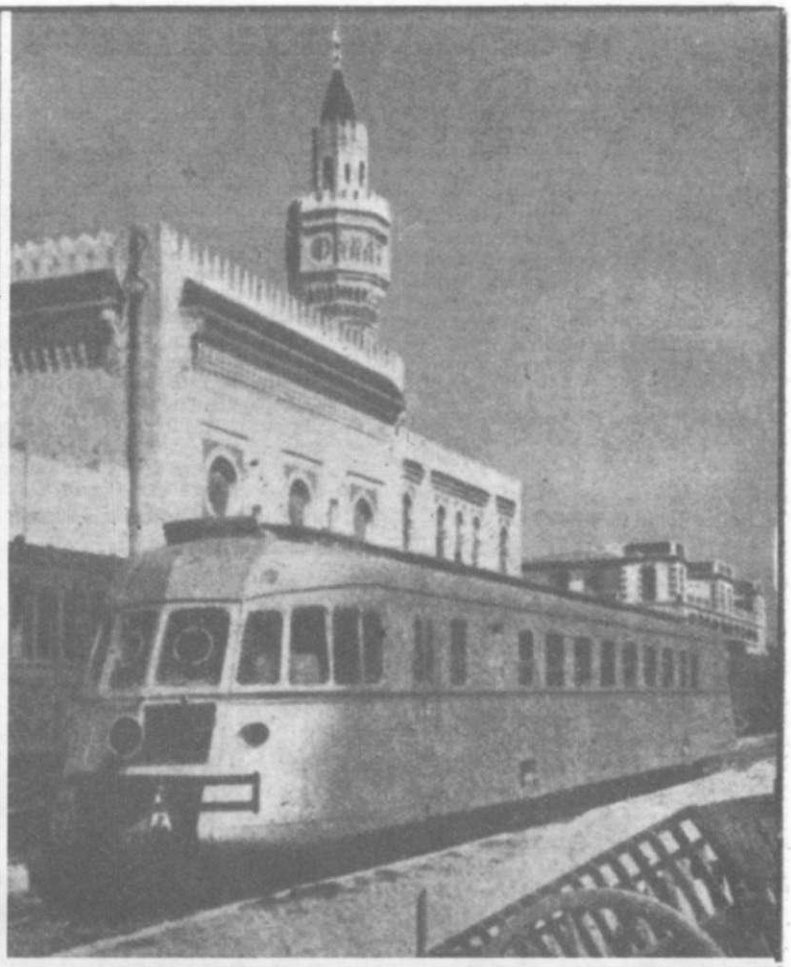
Once Bizerta and Tunis fall into our hands, the systematic subjugation of all South Italy and Sicily becomes inevitable. Turin, Milan and Genoa have proved the material as well as the moral value of concentrated air-attack. Assuming that Mussolini has transferred his humiliated navy—or what fragments still remain—to Venice and the Adriatic ports, these harbours are brought within easy range of our heaviest bombers. Taranto automatically loses whatever value it had as a haven; and Palermo and Messina, Syracuse and Catania, are—judged by modern ideas of distance—within easy pistol-shot of Bizerta-based aircraft.

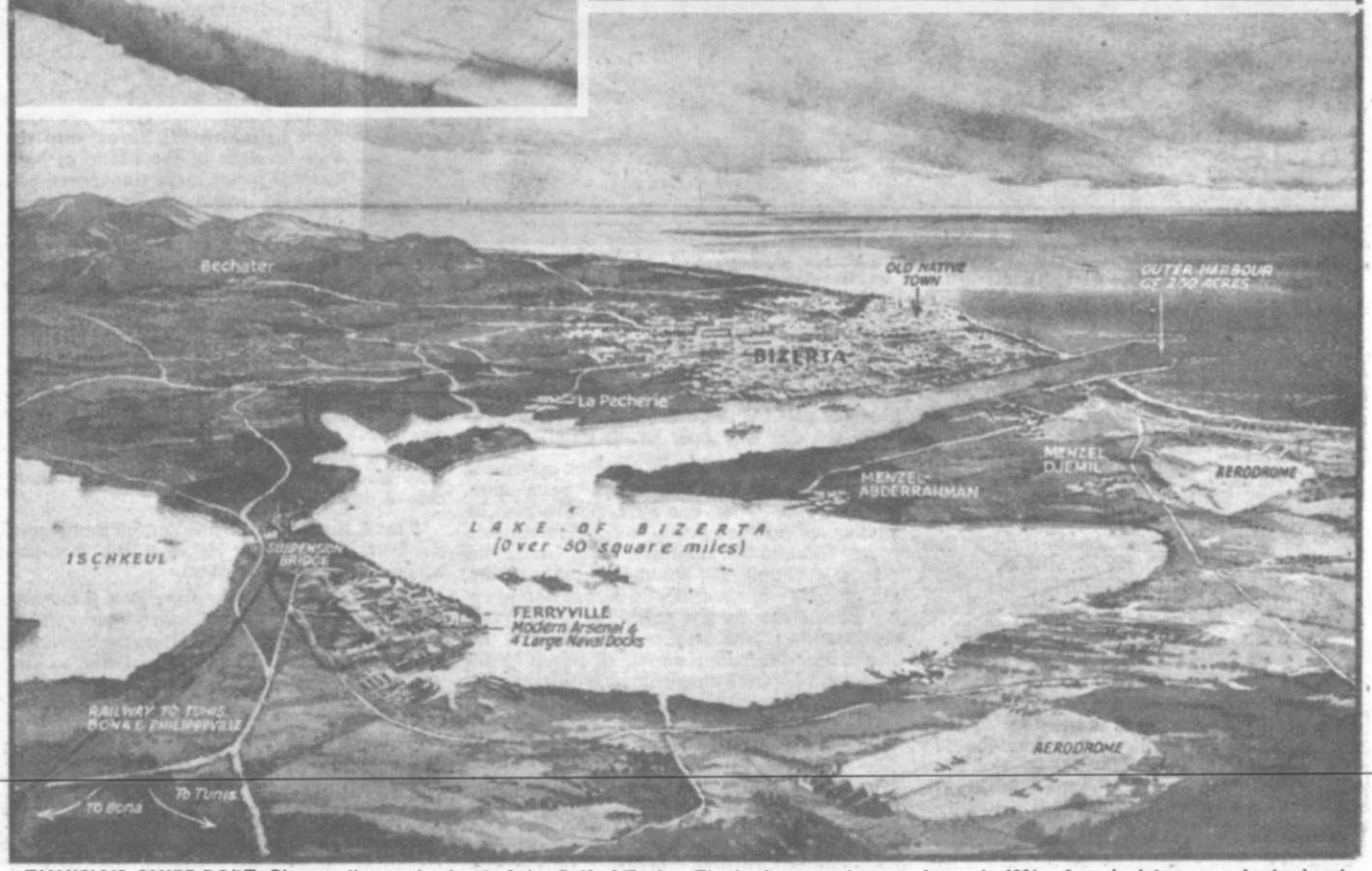
BIZERTA is, indeed, the most vital citadel of all the Middle Sea. It is good for defence; but its capacity as a taking-off place for attack cannot be overestimated. No wonder Hitler is stripping his Eastern Front to bolster up its defence! By striking a ruthless blow at Tunisia the Allies have sealed the Fuehrer's death-warrant in Russia. In aiming to hold both the Russian line and Tunisia he stands to lose both, as events are proving.

Naval control of the Mediterranean is likewise dependent on the possession of this area. With the Italian surface navy practically confined to its harbours, Axis sea-strategy can consist only in the employment of submarines. Valetta, in Malta, was the only harbour open to Allied warships between Gibraltar and Alexandria until the recent occupation of Morocco and Algeria; and the ports of these countries are not much better than open roadsteads. Malta, until Sicily is subjugated, is a precarious haven at best. But if Bizerta be overcome and safely in our hands, an overwhelming anti-submarine flotilla can be based there in complete safety. Conceivably, before surrendering, the Axis will apply a "scorched earth" policy to Tunisia; but even so, the skeleton of a great and invaluable harbour will remain. Admiral Muselier saw to it that the port of Bizerta was prepared for practically all eventualities. It has dry docks capable of holding the greatest battleships. It has repair shops in adequate supply. It has superbly designed and protected submarine docks. All the destroyers and corvettes and "mosquito craft" necessary to overwhelm the Axis U-boat flotillas can harbour in the port or its spacious approaches. From its airfields not only can bomber-attacks be launched at the vulnerable belly of Europe, but sea-patrolling aircraft, equipped to tackle the submarine threat, can operate with ease.

No wonder that, to secure possession of this unique stronghold, General Anderson and his Allies are taking infinite pains!

Finest Harbour on the North African Coastline





TUNISIA'S CHIEF PORT, Bizerta, lies at the head of the Gulf of Tunis. The harbour works were begun in 1891, when the lakes were dredged and channels constructed to admit warships. At Ferryville are situated the arsenal and naval establishments. Two large aerodromes have recently been built, one on the shores of the Lake of Bizerta, and the other near the outer harbour. Top, right, Bizerta station on the railway to Tunis and Sfax. Top left, scene at a bazaar.

Photos, Dorien Leigh, E.N.A. Drawing by courtesy of The Sphere

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THE hard core of the air war has crystallized over the area surrounding the broken, natural central bridge of the Mediterranean, where land, which has since subsided, once joined Europe with Africa and divided the inland sea into two great lakes. Across this bridge the prehistoric monsters fought their way southwards to escape from the rigours of the European Ice Age. Today, modern monsters in the shape of tanks have crossed from Europe, using ship and aeroplane where the sea has covered the missing span.

Everywhere the tempo of the air war is rising, for it is the speed of aircraft which gives them their advantage over all other weapons of war and vehicles of war transport.

Above the narrow stretch of water that separates Cape Bon from the nearest part of the Sicilian coast must wage an air battle for mastery of the sky. For that stretch of ninety miles is within the range compass of the swiftest and most deadly fighters—those of the Hurricane, Spitfire, and Messerschmitt classes; and whoever holds aerodromes on both sides of the broken span of the bridge holds an important military advantage. Indeed, no advance into Europe through Sicily by United Nations forces can be contemplated until British and American fighter squadrons can operate from aerodromes in Sicily in addition to those at Tunis and Bizerta.

The British First Army advanced eastward from Algeria after the union of French North Africa with the cause of the United Nations. Paratroops were dropped in advance to seize points ahead of the army and to deny them to the Axis forces. The advance of the First Army was rapid in the direction of Bizerta and Tunis. It carried troops far in advance of the forward airfield at Bône, and close to the Axis-held airfields at Bizerta and Tunis.

That advance stretched the Allied front in Tunisia almost beyond the effective range of Spitfire short-range fighters based on Bône, and gave the Luftwaffe the opportunity to deploy dive-bombers against the front-line troops of the First Army without having to face the fury of the Spitfires.

It may have been partly the local air superiority which the Axis forces enjoyed in the air over the advanced battle area that enabled them to force the slight withdrawal of the advanced elements of the First Army to more favourable positions where cover was easier to improvise.

In this situation it is possible to perceive the clear lesson of modern tactical warfare, namely, that the movement of surface forces, either by land or sea, without the air cover of the most effective types of fighter aircraft is fraught with grave risks when such movement takes the forces concerned into a zone where enemy aircraft can operate in force.

The most important reinforcement to any tactical advance is that given by short-range fighter aircraft, which are at once the fastest, most manoeuvrable, and swiftest climbing aircraft, and are therefore capable of dominating the day sky over which they operate.

It was therefore important that advanced landing-grounds should have been constructed quickly in the rear of the line of advance of the First Army to enable the short-range fighters to maintain cover over the troops engaging the enemy. Undoubtedly, the mountainous country in North Tunisia is not favourable to the swift construction of aerodromes; and in the first stage of the action the alternative course of bombing the Axis-held forward aerodromes at Bizerta and Tunis was adopted.

THERE has been repeated proof during the course of the War that the bombing of aerodromes is not a satisfactory method of reducing enemy air power. This was demonstrated during the Norwegian campaign when Stavanger aerodrome was one of Bomber Command's principal targets; during the German attack on France when the Luftwaffe failed to knock out the squadrons of the British Advanced Air Striking Force; and again during the Battle of Britain. The effect of such action is too temporary, unless overwhelming surprise is achieved, as was the case when the Luftwaffe bombed the Dutch and Belgian Air Forces before dawn on May 10, 1940, with no declaration of war.

With these past examples known, there was no reason to assume that bombing the aerodromes at Bizerta and Tunis would be effective in reducing Axis air superiority over an advanced fighting zone to a degree which could compensate for the absence of short-range United Nations fighters.

THE mileages involved are of special interest. Bône to Bizerta is 120 miles, to Tunis 136 miles; Malta to Tunis is 236 miles; Marsala (Sicily) to Tunis is 142 miles. The front-line fighting at Mateur is 22 miles south-west of Bizerta; in the Tebourba sector it is 20 miles west of Tunis.

The crucial part of the ground operations is associated with the Axis possession of two important advanced aerodromes, and the United Nations lack of them. Small wonder, then, that Mr. Churchill, speaking at Bradford on Dec. 5, indicated that it would be no easy task to drive the Axis completely out of Tunisia. It will be a hard fight, its course dictated by the situation in the air.

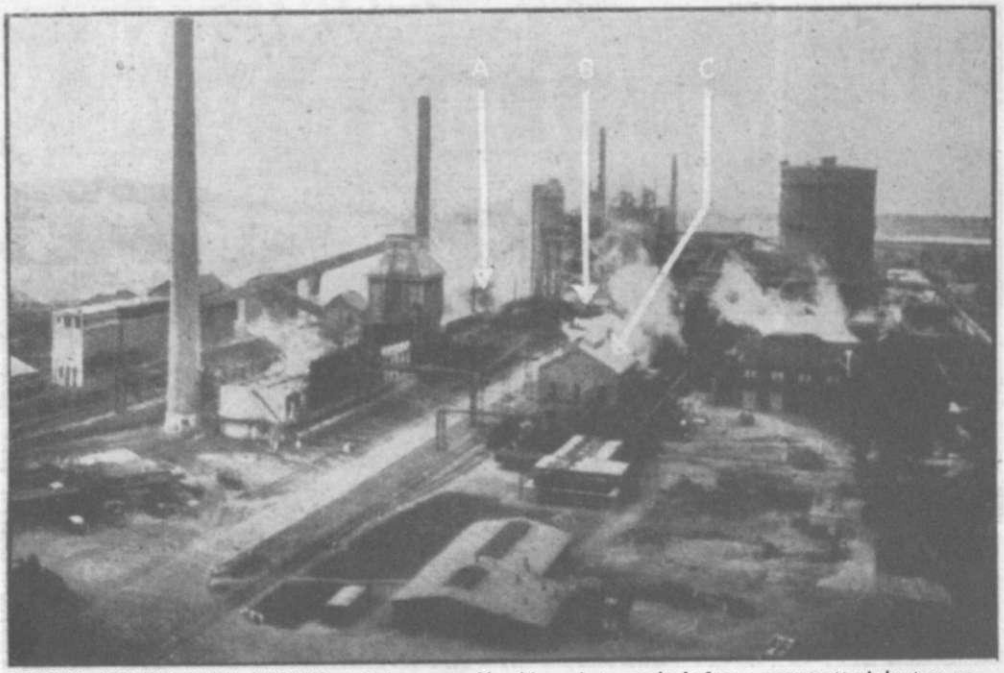
Realizing this, the Axis have sent many of their latest aircraft to North Africa. Among them are Messerschmitt 109Gs and Junkers 86Ps, substratosphere fighter and bomber respectively. One of the few large Blöhm and Voss 6-engined, 45-ton flying-boats possessed by the enemy was shot down off the Tunisian coast; originally designed for transatlantic air transport, it was converted into a troop-carrier, and believed to accommodate 80 troops.

THE advantage the Americans are securing from their policy to build 25 per cent of all multi-engined aircraft as air transports is beginning to show to advantage in the Pacific war zone. A complete field hospital, flown into the Papuan area of the island of New Guinea in ten large transports, was working south of Buna the day after its arrival. Two-ton 105-millimetre guns were flown 1,500 miles from Australia to the Buna-Gona area, where the Japanese are hemmed in against their beachhead; each gun, with its crew and tractor, was carried from Australia to New Guinea in a Fortress, but the last lap over the Owen Stanley Mountains was made by smaller transport aircraft better able to use the forward landing-ground, each one carrying half the load borne by a Fortress. The guns were in action soon after their arrival in the fighting zone.

The R.A.F. has no substantial number of air transport aircraft yet, but this is a gap which must be made good.

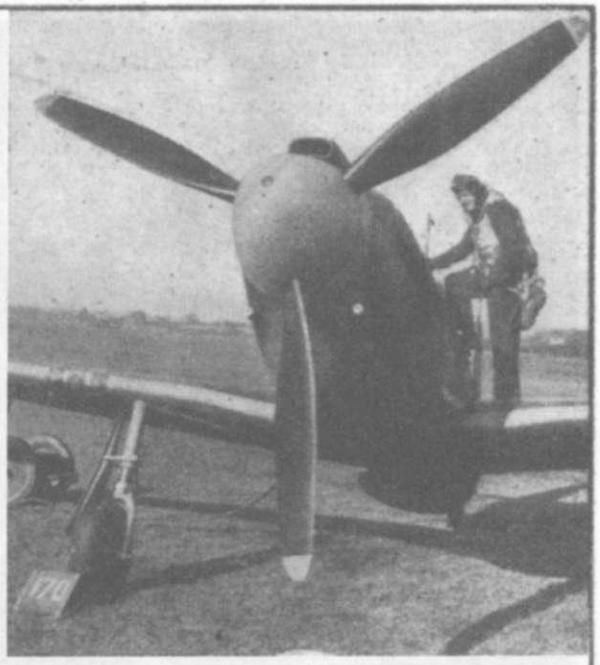
On Friday, Dec. 4, American Liberator bombers made the first United States attack on Italian metropolitan territory by appearing suddenly over Naples in daylight, and scoring direct hits on a battleship and other targets.

Two American pilots have power-dived the Thunderbolt fighter to a speed of 725 m.p.h., probably the fastest speed yet attained by man. German aircraft have been discovered to be using phosphorus-loaded bullets; one British air navigator, wounded by one, died of phosphorus poisoning six days after an operation successfully extracted the particles of metal. The R.A.F. must remember this when the day of reckoning comes. In air fighting this is foul play.



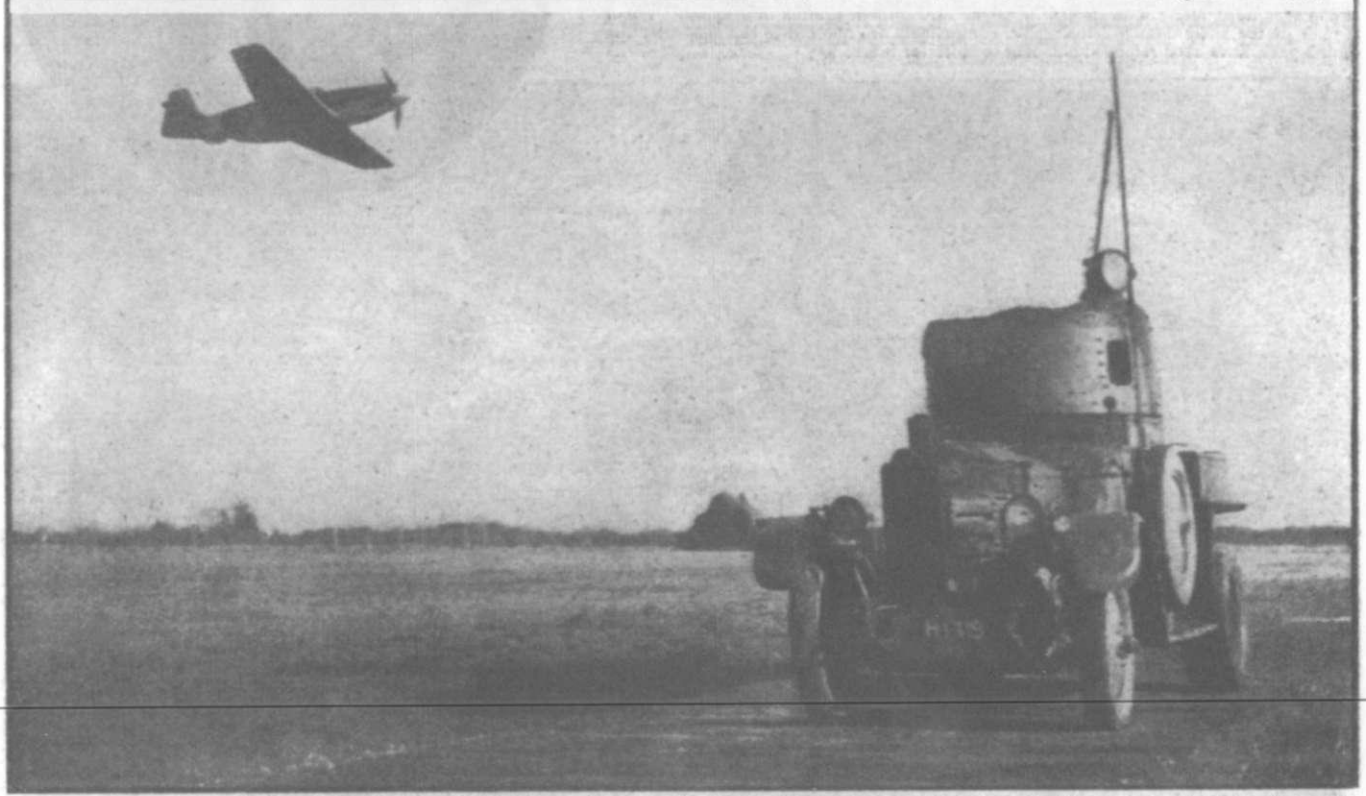
ROYAL DUTCH STEEL WORKS at Velsen, near Ymuiden, photographed after a recent attack by two unescorted Boston bombers during a daylight raid on German-occupied Holland. A, Probable burst near transporter crane serving foundry basin. B, Smoke from explosion near coke-oven plant. C, Bombs bursting among tanks of benzol by-product plants. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Mustangs Are the Eyes of the Army



MUSTANGS are the product of North American Aviation, Inc., of Inglewood, California, and have appropriately been termed the "eyes of the Army." Used extensively by Army Cooperation Command of the R.A.F., these powerful fighters are now cooperating with Fighter Command and have scored outstanding successes over the Continent. Among their many targets have been railway engines, gun posts, bridges and important lines of communication.

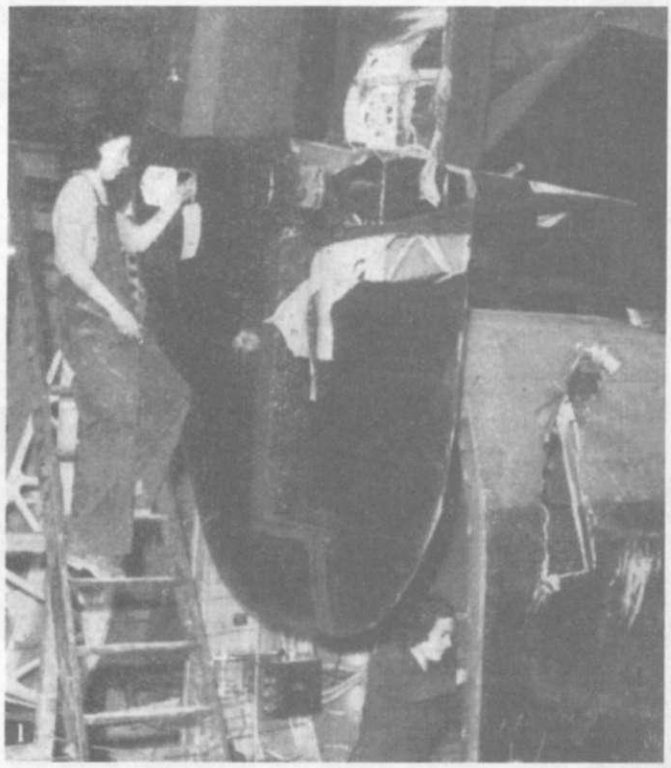
These machines have a wing span of 37 ft. 3 in., a length of 31 ft. 3 in., and are fitted with a single 1,150 h.p. engine. A distinguishing feature is the shallow radiator aft of the wings. The tapered fin and rudder has a square apex, and the cockpit cover is comparatively short. Mustangs habitually fly at what the R.A.F. calls "o feet," that is, skimming the sea and tree-tops, in their long-distance trips to attack enemy targets. Their first big test came with the Dieppe raid on August 19, 1942, and subsequent attacks were made on other vital centres with such success that an American air expert, Maj. T. Hitchcock, declares that the Mustang will prove the "best fighter for 1943."

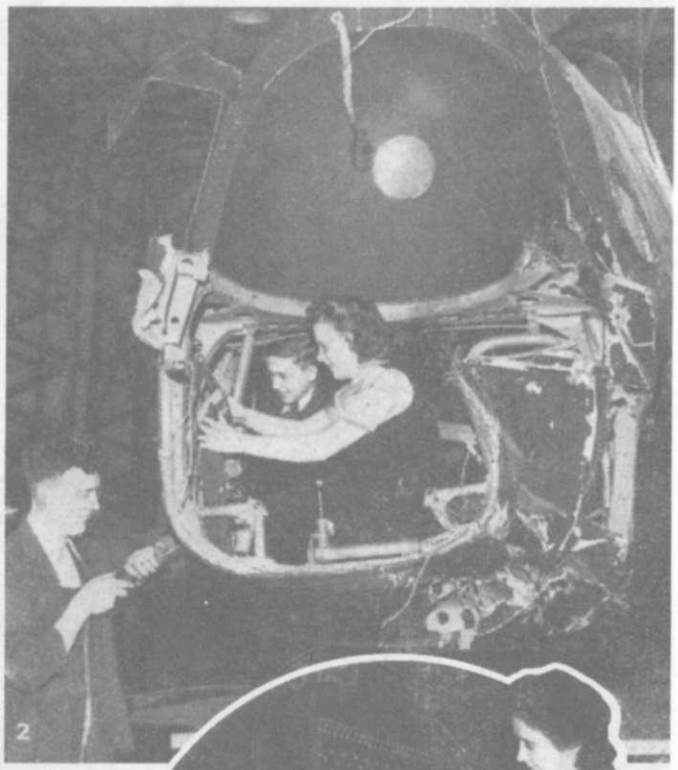


WORLD'S FASTEST ARMY COOPERATION AIRCRAFT. Mustangs have made history by attacking targets in Germany by daylight—the first time that single-engined fighters based in Britain have reached the Reich. Top left, a pilot of Army Cooperation Command of the R.A.F. receives instructions from the Air Liaison Officer at an operational station. Top right, climbing into his Mustang on the airfield. Below, making a low-level attack on an armoured car: a training photograph.

Photos, L.N.A., Planet News, Central Press

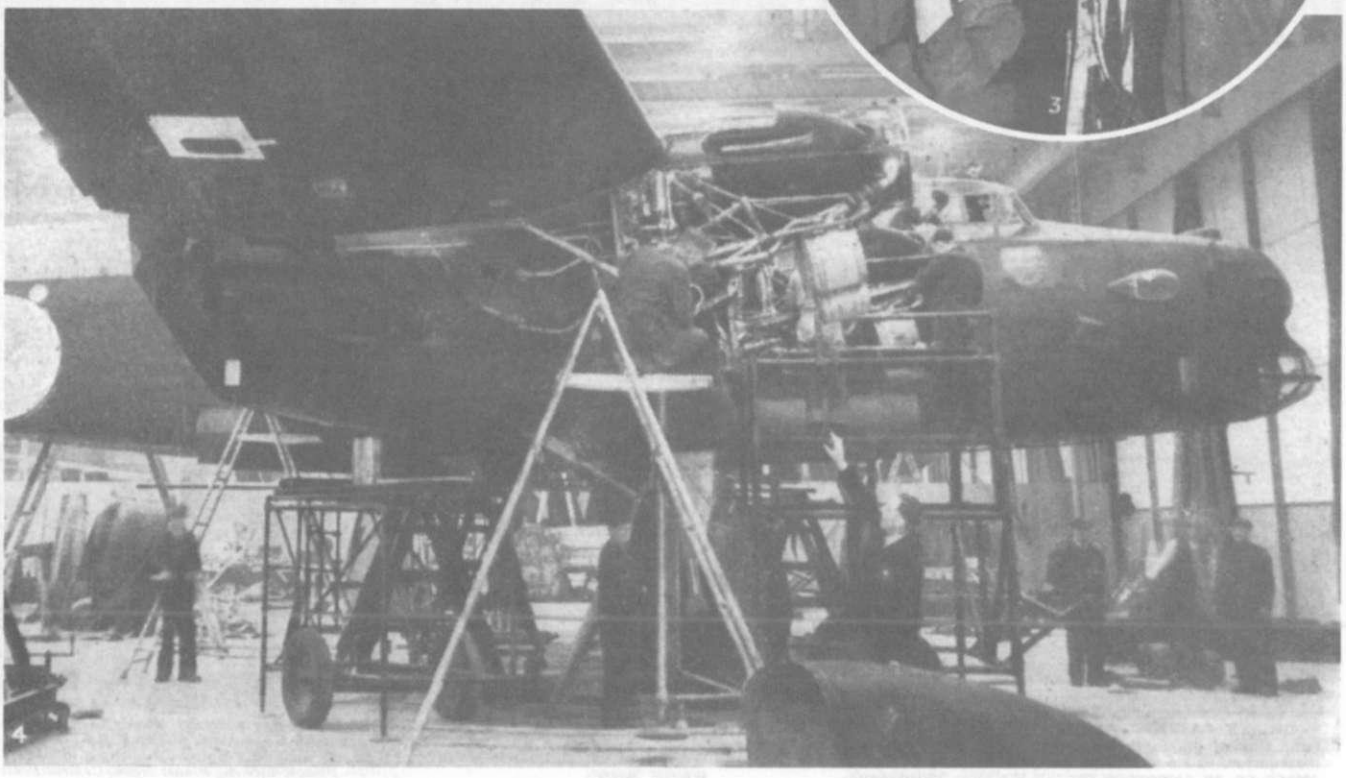
Halifaxes Respond Well to Hospital Treatment





RETURNING from a raid on Turin on the night of November 18, 1942 a Halifax bomber was discovered to be on fire : a powerful flare had caught alight and had not dropped clear. Flames spread to one wing, and soon the aircraft was filled with smoke. The captain (Wing Cmdr. B. V. Robinson, D.S.O., D.F.C.) ordered the bomb doors to be opened in the hope of releasing the burning flare, but it could not be moved. With the fire spreading and the Alps only a few miles ahead, a crash seemed inevitable ; so he ordered the crew to jump out by parachute. He was preparing to jump himself when the fire suddenly went out, and he brought the machine safely back to England.

That speaks volumes, not only for the heroism and determination of the pilot, but for his aircraft. Many and many a time a Halifax has stood up to severe punishment and has made a successful return. As will be seen from the photographs in this page, taken at a depot in the north, the wounded Halifaxes are overhauled, repaired, and put back into service as good as new. 1, Dismantling a damaged plane ; 2, repairing a damaged nose, and 3, a shell-torn fuselage. 4, Another Halifax in hospital. When a plane is too badly damaged for repair, components are reduced to salvage, after the sound parts have been removed and sent to store for future use. *Photos, Central Press*



For the Third Time We March into Benghazi

BENGHAZI, capital of Cyrenaica, occupied by the 8th Army on Nov. 20, 1942, was first taken by British Imperial forces under Gen. Wavell on Feb. 7, 1941. Subsequent evacuation by our troops and occupation by the Germans were announced a few weeks later, on April 3. In Nov. 1941 the second British drive into Libya began, and by Christmas Eve units of Gen. Ritchie's army had swept into Benghazi, having covered the 250 miles from Derna in five days. Again the tide of war turned, and on Jan. 29, 1942 the British withdrew. Advancing from Jedabia, Rommel occupied the town; and during the ensuing months constant bombing attacks were made by Allied planes operating from Egypt.

Men of the 8th Army in lorries (top photo) passing the wreckage of Axis motor transport as they entered the place on Nov. 20, 1942. Immediately above, keenly-interested inhabitants watch Australian infantry marching through the streets on Feb. 7, 1941. Right, the crew of a South African armoured car column enjoy their Christmas fare on the Cathedral Mole at Benghazi—a photo taken on Dec. 24, 1941.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

THE HOME FRONT

by **E. Royston Pike**

WHEN did you last see the "drunken sailor" of the convivial chorus—or a drunken soldier, airman or civilian? More beer is being drunk, and more people are drinking it. But very seldom do we see nowadays the rolling drunkard who, according to G. K. Chesterton, made the rolling English road, going home trailed through the gutter by his bedraggled wife (complete with black eye) and quiverful of sniffing, ragged little urchins. Few there are who, visibly at least, take "one over the eight." Maybe it is because to reach the eighth round is an expensive business, taxation being what it is; it was very much easier to escape from Hogarth's London when the gin shops established above their straw-strewn cellars used to advertise: "Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two pence, straw for nothing." Maybe it is because the composition of present-day beer is such that a cup of tea brewed so that a mouse could dance on it is a much more harmful beverage. Long before the eighth glass we have had more than enough of—water. Or it may be that we are constitutionally more temperate than our fathers were, and know better when to stop.

PUBS, too, have changed a lot. Those dazzling establishments described by the English reformer J. A. Roebuck a hundred years ago—"splendid windows, brass rods and ornaments, a fine showy counter, immense tubs of spirits and gay damsels ready to serve it"—these are as dead as the "spit and sawdust" bars once favoured by the proletariat. The public house is now a very respectable place—so respectable, indeed, that it is ceasing to be a man's sanctum. This is one of the conclusions reached by Dr. Ernest Barker, who after a lifetime spent in the study and teaching of political thought has recently devoted his attention to an analysis of our drinking habits during the war. Writing in the monthly bulletin of the Fellowship of Freedom and Reform, he notes that the "local" has been quietly but successfully invaded by women; it has become the "gossip-shop of both sexes," with darts and other diversions jointly shared. He regards this as an inevitable development; women are working everywhere side by side with men: they naturally come to sit by their side, and drink by their side, in times of leisure. And, indeed, he sees some good in it. Women may bring a breath of fresh air into a frowsty atmosphere, he says, and sweeten and humanize the pubs. There may also be some evil, but "as long as beer is the drink the evil is a possibility rather than a fact."

DR. BARKER is not so happy, however, about the drawing of the young—of both sexes and particularly young boys still in their teens—into the public house. They have money burning in their pockets; they have been working by the side of grown-ups to earn the money; they want a fling. In spite of the efforts of "the Trade" to maintain discipline there is a good deal of noisy display; and "to spend 9s. a week on beer would seem to be moderation in the view of lads who are earning £3 or £4 a week." To continue my quotation:

"Reflection suggests that it is in no way surprising that drinking should have increased. The unemployed have ceased to be unemployed, and they can now get their pint of beer (that, I confess, makes me happy). The community generally is earning good wages and in these days of restricted supplies it has few things on which it can spend. It turns to beer—beer and tobacco—*and tobacco even more than beer.*" From reports received lately it would seem that the lad who spends 9s. a week on beer will spend 18s. on cigarettes; indeed, one observer records that "it is not far from the truth to say that for every shilling spent on beer most adolescents spend four on cigarettes." How shall we judge of this habit? "When I drink a glass of beer (which is rarely) or smoke a pipe of tobacco (which is far more frequently) I say to myself, 'I am paying my taxes; and this is a painless and indeed a pleasant mode of extraction.' When a community at war, under a system of high indirect taxes, drinks and smokes it is not going to the dogs. Anyhow it smokes far more than it drinks, and beer is an innocent compared with tobacco."

SIR WM. BEVERIDGE, whose Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services was published on Dec. 1, is a "social engineer" of the first rank. Born in 1879, after pioneer work as a Civil Servant in establishing Labour Exchanges and National Insurance, he was Director of the London School of Economics from 1919 to 1937, since when he has been Warden of University College, Oxford. *Photo, Topical*

IN truth it is all to the good that "pubs" have changed, since there are still plenty of places where the Sabbatarians do their best to ensure that the choice shall still lie between "gloom and drink," as those penetrating and authoritative writers on English social history, J. L. and Barbara Hammond, put it in their book, The Age of the Chartists. A century ago the English Sunday was a fearsome institution. Sunday theatres were frowned upon; W. Friese-Greene had not invented his moving-picture camera; public transport was in its infancy, and even excursion trains were condemned by the more strait-laced since women making day-trips to the country and seaside were exposed to the temptations of vice . . .

To quote from the Hammonds again, "For the masses of the working classes there was only one day in which they were free of the discipline of mill and workshop. On that day they were refused recreation of mind or body, music or games, beauty of art or nature." In the London of Little Dorrit "There was nothing to see but streets, streets, streets; there was nothing to breathe but streets, streets, streets." That was a century ago; are things very much better today?

Recently there was published a letter above the signatures of Mr. Leslie Henson and seventy other leading actors and actresses stating that "owing to the persistent action taken by the Lord's Day Observance Society in upholding the law passed in 1677 and never repealed or adjusted to modern requirements" they regretted that "we are not allowed to give stage performances for any charity, or performance to which money is subscribed, on any Sunday."

WHILE making it clear that actors and actresses will still be happy "to give their services for the free entertainment of His Majesty's forces, the Lord's Day Observance Society having no jurisdiction over these activities," Mr. Henson declares that:

"We are not going to wangle round the law any longer, although it is being wangled all over England by selling tickets through clubs. We cannot perform for charity on Sundays unless the money is taken through clubs, although cinemas everywhere are open, and the B.B.C. broadcasts plays every Sunday. At a Sunday concert Mr. George Robey, who has raised thousands of pounds for good causes, may not put on his eyebrows. Recently at a Sunday show at the Coliseum, because the frock worn by a soprano looked like a crinoline the show was stopped and the singer had to change into street clothes before being allowed by the L.C.C. representative, sent there by the Lord's Day Observance Society, to continue."

MUCH the most important development on the Home Front of recent days has been the publication of Sir William Beveridge's report on Social Insurance and Allied Services. A document of over 100,000 words, it must be read to be appreciated; it is published by His Majesty's Stationery Office (Cmd. 6404) at 2s. Its proposals affect every man, woman and child living in the country today, and millions yet unborn; it is the greatest thing of its kind since Mr. Lloyd George's Health Insurance Bill of 1911. And as likely as not it will give rise to as vast a volume of controversy. But about the spirit in which it is framed surely there can be no quarrel.

"The proposals of this report represent, not an attempt by one nation to gain for its citizens advantages at the cost of their fellow-fighters in a common cause, but a contribution to that common cause. They are a sign of the belief that the object of government in peace and in war is not the glory of rulers or of races, but the happiness of the common man." And again, "the Plan for Social Security is submitted by one who believes that in this supreme crisis the British people will not be found wanting, of courage and faith and national unity, of material and spiritual power, to play their part in achieving both social security and the victory of justice among nations upon which security depends."

AMONG the other reports that have seen the light of day within late weeks is that of Lord Kennet's Committee on Manpower in Banking and Insurance.

At the outbreak of war there were employed in banking about 66,000 men and 19,000 women. Some 55 per cent of the male managerial and clerical employees have been called up, and in the clearing banks women represent 42 per cent of the present labour force; of the 4,353 men of military age left almost all are over 35 and occupying positions of some responsibility. But Lord Kennet's Committee thinks that more men might be released. It rejects the amalgamation of separate banks as a means of releasing man-power, but recommends that banks should close at 2.30 p.m.; more branches, too, might be closed, although by May last 1,742 branches out of 8,469 whole or part-time offices had been shut.

The Committee recommends similarly that the staff of the insurance companies (industrial and ordinary) should be combed further.

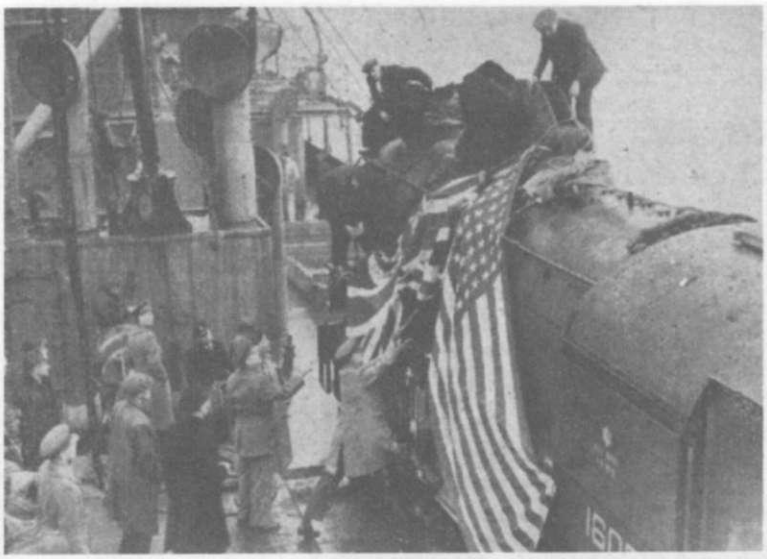
Salvage P.S. "Thousands of tons of bones are being lost annually through being buried by dogs."—*Letter to The Times*

Striking Page from Story of London's Ordeal

THE NIGHT OF MAY 10, 1941 marked the climax of the Luftwaffe's prolonged and savage attack on the metropolis. Front Line, 1940-41, the official story of this grim period of the war (recently issued by H.M. Stationery Office at 2s.), tells of the heroic deeds performed by countless men a women in defence of their city. "May 10 saw nine conflagrations and a further 21 major outbreaks. It was a night that must have graven on many a fire-fighter's heart the words 'no water,'" so many were the mains broken by the bombs. This remarkable photo shows a building crashing in Queen Victoria Street.

By permission of the Commissioner of Police, City of London

Wartime Faces & Places seen by our Roving Camera

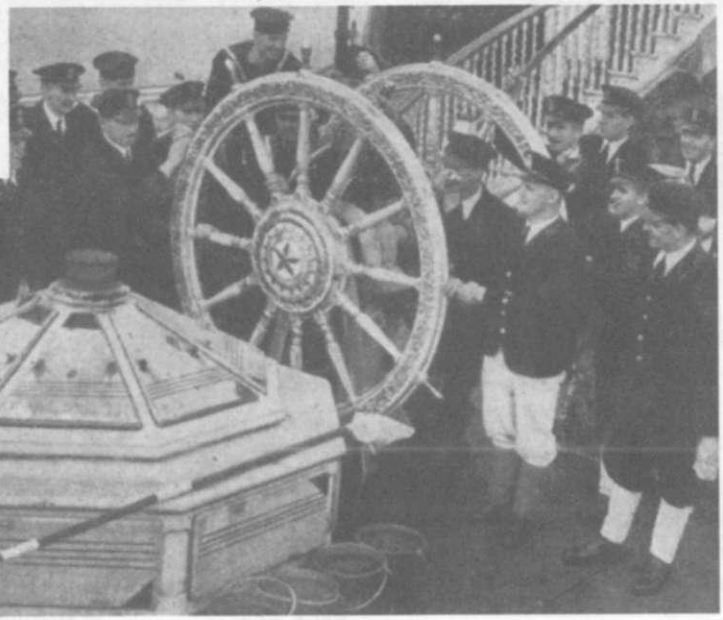


BACK-YARD FARM,' of 2½ acres in Surrey, produces most of the food for a household of eight. Milk is provided by goats, while ducks, chickens, and about 60 rabbits complete the livestock. Mr. P. Lyne, owner of the farm, is seen above turning a furrow with his 3½-h.p. motor plough. Left, Allied Army and Ministry of Supply officials receiving the first shipment of U.S. **UTILITY LOCOMOTIVES** which have been built to conform to both British and Continental systems.

PARACHUTISTS are equipped with portable wireless sets, and are becoming extremely proficient in tackling the intricate problems of modern signalling systems and up-to-date equipment. Above, a parachutist demonstrates his wireless apparatus during an intensive course at the Northern Command's Signal Training Centre.

THANKSGIVING DAY, Nov. 26, was celebrated in London by U.S. forces when thousands of them attended a special service in Westminster Abbey. The Stars and Stripes flew from one of the Abbey towers for the first time in its centuries-old history. Above, an American sergeant carries Old Glory along the central aisle.

MEN OF THE BOOM DEFENCE guard the anti-submarine and anti-torpedo nets that form curtains of steel mesh at the entrances of our harbours. The nets are kept in position by spherical floats on the surface and heavy sinkers on the sea bed. Constant attention is needed to keep these booms in order, and the boom defence ships carry out repairs on the spot.



VICTORIA AND ALBERT, the King's 43-year-old yacht, which was due to be broken up before the War, is acting as an overflow accommodation ship for a Royal Naval gunnery school. Right, trainees examine the picturesque handwheel and binnacle. The handwheel came from the old man-of-war, H.M.S. Royal George.

Photos, Planet News, E. W. Tattersall, Keystone, Associated Press, Fox, G.P.U.

MAJOR (T/Lt.-Col.) V. B. TURNER, of the Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own), displayed the most conspicuous gallantry on Oct. 27, 1942, in the Western Desert. He led a battalion to an objective where 40 German prisoners were taken, after which he organized the captured position for all-round defence. Later in the action he was wounded. On Nov. 20 it was announced that he had been awarded the V.C.

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

Back from Stalingrad We Chased the Nazis

Here is a dispatch from the Stalingrad front of the tremendous battle waged between Gen. Chuikov's Russians and von Hoth's Nazis. Written by Soviet war correspondents Kuprin and Akushin, this dramatic piece of war reportage is reprinted here by courtesy of the Soviet War News.

ALONG the path of our offensive leading to the west over the level steppes of the Don are trenches, blockhouses, dugouts, deep anti-tank ditches, massively-fortified gun sites, abandoned by the enemy. Droves of lost horses wander over the plains, cropping the dry, prickly grass. They have been deserted by their masters, who preferred to trust to their own legs. The ground is thickly strewn with black and green German helmets, gas masks, broken shell- and mine-cases, enemy bodies and dead horses.

Here is a shell-torn height, its slopes covered with scraps of twisted metal and burnt-out machines. The remains of enemy trenches and blockhouses are barely recognizable. The wide tracks of our K.V.s (Klim Voroshilov tanks) are clearly visible in the earth. The heavy machines swept to the west, destructive as a huge torrent, wiping out everything in their path. Rifles and machine-guns are embedded in the crushed trenches. In this area the enemy resisted madly and was exterminated. Traces of hand-to-hand fighting can be seen everywhere. Farther on are abandoned guns, some of them put out of action by our artillery and tanks, some in full working order, complete with large supplies of shells. Salvage companies are loading them on lorries and carting them away to the rear.

BEYOND the height is a place known as "the ravine of death." Its slopes are furrowed with fortifications. It was the enemy's second defence line. It is shattered. The defenders' bodies in their green uniforms lie mouldering everywhere. Burnt-out lorries and planes with Nazi markings block our path. We try to count the abandoned transport lorries and guns. It is hopeless. There are hundreds of them.

West of the ravine it is the same—the road blocked by smashed vehicles and the verges littered with helmets, guns and other equipment. The enemy attempted to get his supply columns away, but failed. Our mobile units rushed into the breach and caught up with the fleeing beast. Cases of shells and mines, cartridges, broken bicycles, motor-cycles, staff documents, are mixed up with the carcasses of horses and dead Nazis. Here is a huge pair of *ersatz* felt boots, their soles stuck with straw and paper. The enemy was busy preparing for the Russian cold, but for him it became too hot. He dropped his boots and ran along barefoot; but even so he was caught. Our men were merciless to those who resisted.

Farther west is the wreckage of a heavy artillery regiment sent by the enemy to hold his defences at the village of Plodovitaya against our advancing troops. Long before it got there it was attacked by our mobile units. The K.V.s encircled the Nazi gunners, who were wiped out before they had any opportunity to get into fighting formation and use their weapons.

PRISONERS moving east block the roads—thousands of them, escorted by groups of Red Army men. The cold wind blows through their thin uniforms. They are wrapped up in looted blankets and scarves. One column consists of 2,800 prisoners—the entire strength of an infantry regiment, captured together with their colonel.

West again, through a liberated village. The country people greet the Red Army men with tears of joy, begging them to come into their houses, to warm themselves and eat. For three months these villagers have suffered under German occupation. The Nazis butchered their cattle, took away their grain. Everywhere is devastation. The soldiers, smoking pungent cigarettes, listen grimly to the terrible tale of a grey-haired collective farmer.

It used to be a wealthy, well-run village. Now it is in ruins. On house walls and fences are German notices, road signs and posters. The people are scraping them off, or painting them over. The signposts are being re-lettered in the Russian language. There are two big cemeteries in the village. The graves of the Nazi "conquerors" are marked by a forest of crosses. Those are the dead of the hot August days and still hotter battles when the numerically superior enemy forces were pressing on towards Stalingrad.

Advanced units of the Red Army firing at the retreating enemy N.W. of Stalingrad. In this page Soviet war correspondents give a vivid account of the Russian offensive before the great Volga city. *Photo, Planet News*

Beyond Abganerovo railway station, towards Aksai, the railway line is blocked with stranded trucks and engines, goods trains crammed with food and ammunition, guns and military supplies. The enemy did not have time to move them before the Red Army struck. Our vanguard groups destroyed the bridges, blew up the track, cut off all lines of retreat. Near by hundreds of disabled and burnt-out German tanks are stacked in an immense scrap-heap.

To the west rolls an endless line of lorries carrying food and supplies, Soviet artillery and cavalry units, reserve regiments and battalions. The offensive continues.

THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD was long and bitter, but by Nov. 25, 1942 the Germans were in retreat in all sectors of this front, and six enemy divisions were reported to have been cut off. Above, a radioed photo shows ruins of the city when Soviet guardsmen—one of them is seen on right—were repulsing an enemy attack. On the turret of the Russian tank which is firing into the ruins are two roughly painted words which in translation mean: "For the Fatherland." As told in this page, the Germans suffered crippling losses as the Russians, in spite of desperate enemy resistance, continued to advance. *Photo, News Chronicle*

The 'Eyeties' Begged Us to Give Them a Lift

With the victorious Eighth Army in pursuit of Rommel's beaten hordes, T. E. A. Healy, war correspondent of the Daily Mirror (from which this story is reprinted), drove through 70 miles of Nazi wreckage. He tells of amazing scenes in the Egyptian desert, and of forlorn enemy troops anxious above everything to give themselves up.

I AM writing this dispatch on notepaper of Rommel's crack lorry-borne infantry division, the 90th Light. The paper was taken from a German lorry overturned by an R.A.F. bomb outside Fuka. Can you imagine what today has meant, to advance seventy miles in one hop with our Eighth Army?

Continuously to the left, right, and ahead the desert has been strewn with enemy transport wreckage, enemy tanks burnt, bombed and blown up. I've looked on death and destruction till I'm sick of it. It has told me eloquently just how completely we've smashed the Axis in Africa. We went across the battlefield of the last ten days, driving gingerly over mined ground and past the wreckage of German and British tanks.

Beside a cluster of German Mark III tanks I came on a grave marked by a cross made of pieces of a jam box, on which a British soldier had written: "Here lies unknown German soldier," and had propped up on the grave the soldier's knife, fork and comb, leaning them against his tin helmet. There were photos about of German wives and children to whom their husbands and fathers will never return. There were letters home and letters from home blowing about in the dust. Up the track we came across still greater masses of guns and ammunition and tanks abandoned.

I NOTED that over only a few graves the swastika of Nazism was inscribed. Others bore the Black Cross of the Kaiser's Germany. Above one grave protruded one of the propeller blades of a Spitfire. It was the grave of a Canadian buried by Germans. Near the graves was a pile of new enemy overcoats and boots which soldiers were fitting on. The scene reminded me of Caledonian Market. One soldier looked up from boot-fitting and said: "Wouldn't der Fuehrer be derfurious!"

As we went westwards the destruction and havoc wrought by the R.A.F. intensified. In a swath almost 200 yards wide enemy transport lay charred and battered. The scene was eloquent of fear and panic of the worst kind. Many vehicles were blown up on their own mines, for the road on either side was mined a foot off the tarmac.

DRIVING THEMSELVES TO PRISON! Left to their fate by Rommel, thousands of Italians gave themselves up, not at all unwillingly. Some (like those here) even drove in their own lorries to the surrender points.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Movement up the narrow road was slower as we got farther westward because the traffic problem was further complicated by the arrival of a stream of prisoners, mainly German, in huge German and Italian lorries.

We knew there was something peculiar about the procession and couldn't make out what it was. Suddenly someone shouted: "Gosh, they're driving themselves to prison!" They were, and only in the front vehicle and in the last was there a guard.

Fully 2,000 prisoners passed in one hour. They seemed, even for Germans, utterly unconcerned, and when one of their trucks broke down they clambered out and watched British mechanics repair it.

WHAT a sight for the prisoners it must have been, this immense column of British transport, British tanks and men filing their way forward! Perhaps at that moment as they looked at it they realized why they were beaten and in the bag. Every British transport vehicle bore some girl's name. How many girls in Britain—Dorises, Eileens, Annes, Jeans, Betties, Evelyns—have been driven in spirit into captured enemy towns in this campaign? Tankmen always give their vehicles fighting names like Thunderer, Valiant, Defiant, etc. One man broke the rule and named his Mother. We drove past cars abandoned in hundreds, guns left with piles of ammunition, huge heaps of clothing and ground-sheets.

While we had lunch we saw soldiers prodding the roadside for mines, which are like round covered pudding dishes, with the charge an inch wide in the centre. Soldiers were digging them up like turnips.

A FEW miles farther on I got out of a car with another reporter near a group of twenty-eight forlorn and desolate Italians. They came up, saluted, and said they wanted to surrender but could not find anyone to take them prisoner. Everyone was in too much of a hurry.

One spoke French and asked whether we could take them. We accepted their surrender. We stopped a lorry driven by a young Scot. He did not want to cart "ruddy Eyeties" to a prison camp, but said he would hand them over to the military police. The prisoners brightened up considerably at this, but took so long explaining to themselves that everything was settled that the Scot said angrily: "Well, bloody well get cracking or I'll leave you behind."

They quickly got on the truck, and as the truck moved away the Italians thanked us profusely and said there were some of their mates farther down the road. Would we be so kind as to help them too? But prisoner groups were too many and we were in too much of a hurry to bother. They were popping out of holes all over the desert and looking for someone to take charge of them.

I saw them begging lifts to prison from our lorries and even tanks. Some at least of them were covered in vermin.

Over the Alps We Flew to Bomb Genoa

Another smashing success was scored by the R.A.F. on the night of November 7, when home-based bombers inflicted on Genoa, Italy's great naval base, its heaviest raid of the war. Impressions of this sensational 1,300-mile flight are given below in the form of extracts from the log of a "novice"—a R.A.F. Public Relations Officer who flew in a Stirling.

FIVE-ELEVEN in the afternoon: I'm airborne, but didn't know it. I poked my head up the astro-dome to find out how the take-off was getting on, and discovered that we were about 500 feet up—so smooth had been the getaway. Several other Stirlings are circling around, gaining height and preparing to set course.

6.5 p.m. We cross the coast. It is still light enough to observe that, owing to the state of the tide, the white line of sea breakers does not at all conform to the map. There is a fine sunset to the starboard beam as we cross the Channel. Long streaks of cloud are lit by a fading red. I go down into the bomb-aimer's hatch to try to spot the moment when we cross the coast of France. But the dark blue on the windows imperceptibly changes to cloud and I can smell the mist in the aircraft. And so the only news I get that we are over France is the gentle evasive action of the pilot. No flak comes up.

6.50 p.m. We are passing through a rain storm.

7.30 p.m. St. Elmo's fire round the propellers. Now again in the astro-dome I can see the circles of flame round the propellers, and the front-gunner reports blue darts on his gun barrels and flame trickling around the metal of the turret. This lasts about ten minutes. We are climbing for the Alps, and the flight-engineer switches on oxygen. The smell and feel of the mask are strange at first and rather like an anaesthetist's apparatus.

8.14 p.m. I am lying flat over the bottom blister. Though there is no moon, the Alps come into view—surfaces of a grade of purplish-white peppered with black. The captain suggests that if I come forward again I shall soon see Genoa. I take several deep breaths of oxygen and then plug out to struggle forward. Though the Stirling is a huge aircraft, it seems that nothing could be big enough for me, a novice, to move gracefully in. As I climb towards the nose my dangling inter-com. winds itself around everything from the automatic pilot to the flight-engineer's neck. Just visible in his macabre red light, the captain looks up, grins, and shouts "How are you feeling?"

"Fine!" I say. "Liar," says he. "Don't worry, it's always the same on your first trip. If we are worried, think what those poor silly Eyeties must be feeling. Look over there. That's Genoa. No fun being in Genoa on a night like this!"

We are the first aircraft to approach the target, but searchlights are wandering frantically across the sky while we're miles away. The flak is not as expected. At first, all I can see are masses of white gun-flashes on the ground. As we circle over the Mediterranean in towards the target, I begin to see the light stuff coming up and some red fireballs ascending.

9.5 p.m. Now it becomes frightening. There appears to be no way through the wall of searchlights and flak. The front-gunner goes down into the bomb-aimer's hatch and the captain starts violent jinking. From the astro-dome I can see the glow of our exhausts, and the great hump of the outer engines rising up and descending again against the vivid light of the flashes and the beams. As we wind our way along, the giant humps on either side continue to rise.

9.16 p.m. "Open bomb doors!" comes through the inter-com., and then "O.K., bomb doors open!" I lift my oxygen mask and bite into a small English Newtown apple. For some reason it gives me great pleasure to munch an English apple over Genoa. As we get over the searchlights I am less scared. Down below the gun flashes reveal the blocks of buildings. Searchlights wander across our propellers, edge the wing

tips, flick the tail, and, fantastic as it seems, never catch us. But the flak comes nearer, and the red fireballs closer as the captain levels out for the bombing run and calls to the bomb-aimer, "O.K., remember the precise target!" We are dead steady for a mighty long 20 seconds before the bomb-aimer reports, "Bombs gone!" And now the thinking begins again.

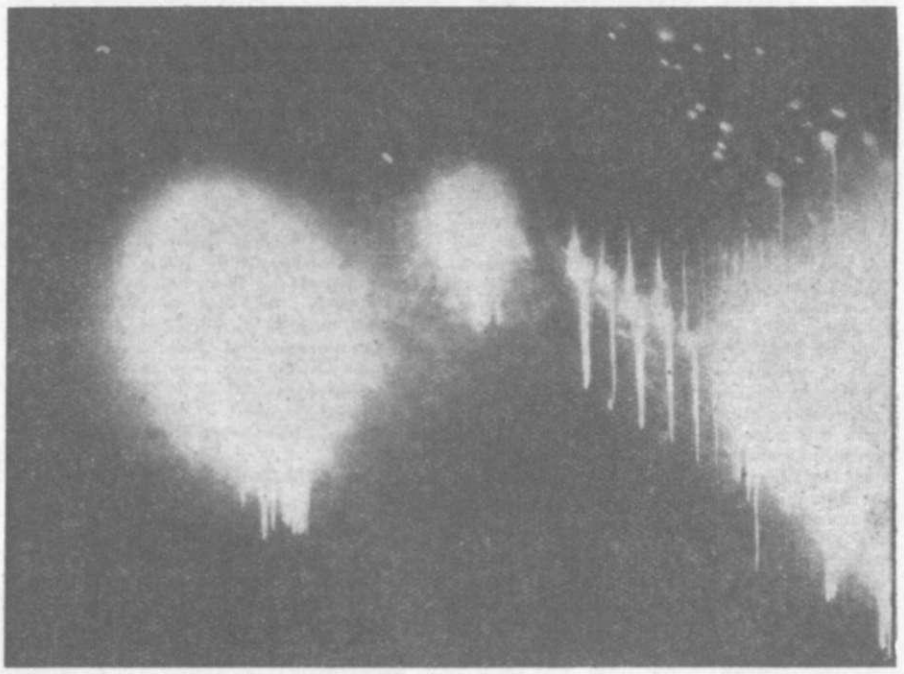
The lattice-work of searchlights which from a distance I thought we would never penetrate now seem to have the most comforting wide spaces between them. Then down below I can see our incendiaries, the first fires in Genoa on Saturday night. The rear-gunner proudly points out that those are gold and broad, which means that the bombs have turned into real fires. Incendiaries on their own are silver, glittering, and sharp.

As we come out of it flak increases. It comes up towards us and then they try to shoot out the flares which now illuminate the town and the bay. Within ten minutes of the first flares Genoa is alight. So far as I can see the main huge fires are near the coast-line and harbour. A bomb flash adds to bomb flash, and before we are out of sight not one solitary searchlight remains on. I step down to allow the wireless-operator to have a look. He watches for a moment, grunts "It looks good!" and we change places. I peer again at the glorious view of the Alps under the stern, and then slowly, once more, the scene merges into the cloud over the plains of France.

Static electricity again brings a kind of dangerous beauty to the Stirlings, and then hail beats on our windows. Near the coast of France cloud gives out, and the flak and searchlights appear.

01.36 a.m. I can see the very comforting light of our flare paths back at base. "O.K., V for Victor," says base. "You can land now." And so we land and wander into the interrogation-room and people make the usual jokes, such as "You can identify an Italian fighter because he is always going the other way!"

And so to the operational breakfast with bacon and egg and hot tea and the "line book" already waiting on the table. My statement about thinking our incendiaries were Italian searchlights goes straight into the line book. But I'm forgiven, being a novice.



SATURDAY NIGHT IN GENOA. "It looks good!" said the wireless-operator in the accompanying story, when he looked down on the dock area strewn with scintillating pockets of fire. In this photograph, taken on the occasion of the raid of Oct. 22, scores of fires are burning; the vertical streaks are descending flares. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

NOV. 25, 1942, Wednesday *1,180th day*

Russian Front.—N.W. and S. of Stalingrad Soviet advance continued; 15,000 more prisoners taken.

Burma.—R.A.F. made day and night attacks on Jap airfields and railways.

China.—U.S. aircraft attacked Jap shipping at Canton and Hankow.

Australasia.—Two Jap destroyers sunk off New Guinea in attempts to relieve troops at Buna.

NOV. 26, Thursday *1,181st day*

N. Africa.—Enemy driven from Medjez-el-Bab, 30 m. S.W. of Tunis.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked aerodromes in Sicily.

Russian Front.—Red Army in Don bend took 12,000 more prisoners.

Siam.—U.S. heavy bombers made first attack on oil-refinery at Bangkok.

Australasia.—Flying Fortresses raided Jap aerodrome near Buin.

NOV. 27, Friday *1,182nd day*

Air.—Mustangs and Spitfires attacked railway and water transport targets in France and Low Countries.

N. Africa.—First Army entered Tebourba, 15 m. from Tunis.

Mediterranean.—U.S. aircraft attacked docks at Leros, Dodecanese.

Russian Front.—Soviet counter-offensives continued round and in Stalingrad.

China.—U.S. bombers attacked Jap shipping and aircraft at Canton.

General.—German troops entered Toulon; French warships scuttled by order of Adm. de Laborde.

NOV. 28, Saturday *1,183rd day*

Air.—R.A.F. made heavy raid on Turin.

N. Africa.—Allied forces repulsed counter-attacks at Tebourba. Bizerta and Tunis bombed by Allied aircraft; Bône twice raided by Axis.

Libya.—Tripoli raided by our heavy bombers.

Mediterranean.—Announced that British submarines had sunk nine enemy supply ships bound for Tunisia.

Russian Front.—New Soviet offensive launched on Central front, E. of Velikiye Luki and W. of Rzhev.

General.—Fighting French forces landed on Réunion Island in Indian Ocean.

NOV. 29, Sunday *1,184th day*

Air.—R.A.F. again raided Turin.

N. Africa.—Our forces occupied Djedaida, N.E. of Tebourba, in Tunisia.

Libya.—U.S.A.A.F. made daylight raids on Tripoli.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops broke enemy lines on E. bank of Don.

U.S.A.—Announced that Japs had re-occupied Attu in the Aleutians.

NOV. 30, Monday *1,185th day*

N. Africa.—German counter-attack on Allied positions in Djedaida. Two French submarines from Toulon reached Algiers.

Russian Front.—Further Russian advances on Central front and round Stalingrad.

Indian Ocean.—U.S. heavy bombers raided Andaman Is. and Rangoon.

Australasia.—U.S. fleet intercepted Jap convoy off Guadalcanal, sinking six destroyers and three transports for loss of one U.S. cruiser.

General.—Announced that Réunion Island had joined Fighting French.

DEC. 1, Tuesday *1,186th day*

N. Africa.—Allied air attacks on Tunis, Bizerta, Gabès and Sfax.

Libya.—Enemy artillery successfully engaged by our forces at El Agheila. Our heavy bombers raided Tripoli.

Mediterranean.—Navy sank two Axis destroyers and four supply ships bound for Tunisia; destroyer Quentin sunk by enemy aircraft.

Russian Front.—Red Army continued to advance on Stalingrad and Central fronts in face of increased resistance.

Australasia.—In New Guinea Allied ground forces cut Jap lines between Buna and Gona.

DEC. 2, Wednesday *1,187th day*

Air.—Frankfort and other places in W. Germany bombed by night.

N. Africa.—Allied troops beat back big German counter-attack with tanks and dive-bombers in Tebourba area.

Mediterranean.—Two Axis supply ships sunk by torpedo aircraft and Italian torpedo-boat sunk by light naval forces off Tunisia.

Australasia.—Arrival of U.S. troops in New Zealand announced.

DEC. 3, Thursday *1,188th day*

N. Africa.—Another enemy counter-attack repulsed near Tebourba. Bizerta docks and Tunis airfield raided by Allies.

Australasia.—Allied airmen shot down 23 Jap fighters and drove off naval convoy attempting to reinforce Buna-Gona area of New Guinea. Off Guadalcanal, U.S. aircraft scored hits on two Jap cruisers and one destroyer.

General.—Announced that defence pact between U.S.A. and Liberia was signed on March 31.

DEC. 4, Friday *1,189th day*

N. Africa.—Axis forces recaptured Djedaida; hard fighting proceeding in triangle Tebourba-Djedaida-Mateur.

Mediterranean.—U.S. Liberators bombed Naples by daylight without loss, doing much damage to warships and port.

Libya.—Allied heavy bombers raided Tripoli by night.

Russian Front.—Russian offensive continued inside and outside Stalingrad.

Burma.—R.A.F. and U.S. bombers raided Jap shipping and supply columns.

DEC. 5, Saturday *1,190th day*

N. Africa.—Enemy mechanized and infantry units entered Tebourba; our troops regrouped on surrounding heights.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops on offensive round Stalingrad, near Tuapse; and on Central and Leningrad fronts.

India.—Jap bombers and fighters made brief attack on Chittagong area of Bengal.

DEC. 6, Sunday *1,191st day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. submarine Unique.

Air.—Nearly 100 light R.A.F. bombers attacked Philips radio works at Eindhoven, Holland. U.S. Flying Fortresses and Liberators raided Fives-Lille locomotive works and airfield at Abbeville. R.A.F. night bombers raided S.W. Germany in bad weather.

N. Africa.—German attack in Tebourba area of Tunisia penetrated one of our positions.

Russian Front.—Red Army offensive continued on Central front and in Stalingrad area.

Australasia.—In New Guinea U.S. troops broke through at a fresh point in Buna-Gona beachhead.

DEC. 7, Monday *1,192nd day*

Air.—Whirlwinds and Mustangs attacked railways and shipping in France, the Low Countries and Germany.

N. Africa.—After counter-attack by one of our armoured units the enemy withdrew in Tebourba area.

Libya.—Our heavy bombers attacked Misurata and aerodromes near Homs.

Russian Front.—Many German counter-attacks repulsed on Central front and N.W. of Stalingrad.

Australasia.—In fierce air fighting over New Guinea 20 Jap aircraft were destroyed. Allied bombers attacked Lae and Jap bases in New Britain.

DEC. 8, Tuesday *1,193rd day*

Air.—Mosquitoes attacked industrial and railway targets in Holland and N.W. Germany. Turin again raided by night.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops continued to make progress in and around Stalingrad and on Central front in spite of violent German resistance.

Australasia.—Allied ground forces at Buna threw back enemy counter-attack; Allied bombers drove off six destroyers attempting to relieve Jap forces.

Flash-backs

1939

November 26. *Admiralty announced sinking of armed merchant cruiser Rawalpindi by Deutschland on November 23.*

November 30. *Russia launched land, sea and air attack on Finland.*

December 7. *Polish submarines Orzel and Wilk escaped from Baltic and joined British Navy.*

1940

December 8. *Greeks occupied Argyrokastro in Albania.*

1941

December 6. *Russians began counter-offensive at Moscow.*

December 7. *Japan declared war on Gt. Britain and U.S.A. Pearl Harbour bombed.*

December 8. *Japanese troops landed in Northern Malaya.*

Editor's Postscript

I AM sure that on Christmas Eve, when this number of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED will be on sale, many of my readers will be delighted to know that next month "huge stores of food, clothing, etc., will pour into Great Britain from America, and large stocks will be diverted to help sustain the famished section of Europe and Norway, freed from direct Axis intervention." But we are warned that it will not be "roses, roses all the way," as Japan will still fight on tenaciously. This, it would appear, is known to those who are aware that "the eventful year of 1943 opens under the influence of Saturn, combined with the determination of Capricorn the Goat." But as I am not one of those who know anything more about goats than that they are the most odoriferous of domestic animals, I can only pass this cheering information on with due acknowledgement to my entertaining old friend the prophet "Old Moore," from whom I have so often culled words of cheer in these pages.

SOME day I feel sure that his persistence will be rewarded; though the stars may at times be a year or two fast as he reads them, events must at some time or another catch up with the forecast. While I am offering some odds against that taking place in January 1943 I have a profound conviction that when we have said good-bye to 1942 we shall be stepping into the most momentous year of the War, before the end of which we may well have listened to the death knell of Nazidom in Europe and be turning to the cleansing of the eastern hemisphere from the yellow stain with which the Japs have soiled it. Still, the path ahead of the nations struggling for freedom is beset with thorny thickets and prickly pitfalls and only simpletons will expect to go primrose-gathering even in 1943. And as for roses, let's remember they have thorns when we go gathering them. "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety"—I remembered Neville Chamberlain quoting this when I heard it again from the lips of Hotspur (Henry IV) at the Westminster Theatre the other week. And I'm sure we shall do so, if not in 1943 certainly in 1944.

ONE of the many lessons we have learnt in these War years is the reassessment of values: things we have long cherished suddenly seem worthless, what we have despised turns precious. The value of transport is not likely again to depreciate, since War conditions have emphasized its supreme importance in every concern of modern life. Though I have done my best from time to time to illustrate this in these notes, I confess that not until last autumn had I become so transport-conscious as I found myself when, confronted with an abundant crop of lovely apples, I had to see the orchard becoming ankle deep with windfalls. Nobody wanted to buy them, few were willing even to take the crop for the pulling. They could not all be stored for lack of accommodation, and many of them, though splendid specimens, were not "good keepers."

THANKS eventually to some enterprising young people associated with the Y.W.C.A. and other organizations, I had the satisfaction of seeing something like two tons of this rich harvest cleared from the orchard and transported for use in certain schools and canteens, whence letters of keen appreciation for the gift were received. But it was really no gift; merely the removal of what, owing to the sheer abundance of the fruit, had become an embarrassment. And yet in some parts of England, and in London, as I myself had frequent occasion to observe, apples in no way comparable with any in the numerous sackfuls joyously picked by Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and members of the W.V.S. from my orchard of little more than an acre, were selling freely at 8d. per pound. I know of many other instances where "apple acres" in the same district were in similar plight, and I have no doubt they could be multiplied by the thousand throughout the country, so that when produce which does not fetch even a penny a pound on the trees cannot be bought under 8d. at a distance from its place of origin, it is worth remembering that the true value resides not in the article but in its transportation from where it is abundant to where it is scarce.

IN looking at a news reel of Mr. Wendell Willkie some little time ago, I made a note: "remember Big Bill Thompson of Chicago." I came across this note last night, and after a little cogitation it struck me that I must have seen some fanciful resemblance between the intrepid Republican leader and Chicago's aggressive mayor of twelve years ago. Then I remembered that Big Bill aquired some momentary fame from warning King George V "not to put his snoot into Chicago." Why Big Bill did this I forget; but I can conceive no advice ever so needlessly offered. It is possible that, as Mr. Willkie had just started to "prod" Great Britain to open a second front (without knowing that in closest alliance with the official American leaders we were just about to do a bit of prodding in North Africa which will stand in history for centuries to come) the thought struck me, while watching the self-satisfied Mr. Willkie on the news reel and listening to his voice, that his advice was just about as apposite to the case of Britain's leaders at this day as Big Bill's was to the least aggressive and most tactful of British monarchs, whose qualities are so eminent in his son today. Perhaps our Press has given too much space to the utterances of the said Mr. Willkie, who, in my estimation, was making nothing more than political capital out of the great opportunity provided by the generous gesture of Mr. Roosevelt when he sent his political opponent to report on aspects of the War on all fronts. His ungenerous use of this opportunity to feed an ancient Republican grudge against the British Empire should, in my opinion, reduce the interest of his name as a headliner on the front pages of the British Press, even though we have no counterpart of Big Bill Thompson in England who would be so free of speech and so impolite as to tell Mr. Willkie to keep his snoot out of the British Empire.

ADM. SIR MAX K. HORTON, K.C.B., D.S.O., whose appointment as C.-in-C. Western Approaches, in succession to Adm. Sir P. Noble, was announced on Nov. 9, 1942. He had been in charge of British submarines since the beginning of the War, and was succeeded as Flag Officer Submarines by Capt. C. B. Barry, D.S.O.
Photo, Topical Press

NOT a week goes by that I do not have occasion to marvel at the way in which Malta carries on, despite its thousands of air raids, as I am continually receiving letters from readers there, although I can give only occasional mention to any of them. One from a reader named Eddie Gauci (if I do not misread his signature) of B'Kara, took only about ten days to arrive in London and contained an order for the binding cases for Volume V, as he has all the others safely bound, and while congratulating me on the recent changes in the character of our contents, he adds: "I hope you will continue to publish THE WAR ILLUSTRATED in this way, or in any other way, as in it you are performing a splendid work for all of us who are proud to be members of the British Empire although we cannot all have an opportunity of visiting its capital city."

THE foregoing I had written some weeks ago and the Malta scene has changed meanwhile. The island that could take it is now the fortress that can give it! And here I might mention as still further evidence that "Britain delivers the goods" a letter just to hand from Geo. W. Crossan, of Hamilton, N.Z. Not even a single number has failed to reach what he calls "this farthest outpost of Empire," as he had received every issue up to No. 130 when he wrote to me in September.

LOOKING through an old stage journal of 1892 today, I notice that its letter from America is headed "Across the Pond"—the facetious name for the Atlantic current in the 'nineties. But how appropriate to the contracting world in which we are living, when eight hours suffice for its aerial crossing! Many a true word spoken in jest.

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